



# **Konjiki no Word Master**

## **The Unique Cheat of the Man Dragged in by the Four Heroes**

### **Second Arc: Into the Demon World**

**Tomoto Sui (     )**

# Chapter 69: Majuu Girl – Shamoe

Hiiro was sleeping on his back, yet his body somehow felt heavy. Hiiro suddenly opened his eyelids. He was startled by the spectacle that appeared before him. He did not know when or who had mounted themselves on top of him. Hiiro attempted to raise his voice.

“Wha...—!?”

However ~smack~ he was smacked on the mouth by that very someone’s hands.

*(Why is this guy.....here!?)*

He was shocked by who was there. Although he could not see who it was for a moment, he determined the person’s identity upon looking at their head, done up in twin tails. Yes, the person in question was the maid named Shamoe.

However, there was obviously a different atmosphere surrounding her compared to the time at dinner. Her previously pink hair was now stained in a pitch black darkness. Her eyes that seemed to faintly sag were now sharpened like a beast as they emitted a golden glow.

Furthermore, she possessed something that she clearly did not have during the dinner. This being a set of kemonomimi and tail.

*(What the hell’s this guy trying to...—!?)*

She looked at Hiiro with an expression that resembled a beast that had found its prey. She was looking down on him with a smile, licking her lips in delight. Hiiro found himself stunned at the changes that had occurred to her compared to the time at dinner.

*(I don’t really get what’s happening, but for now—!)*

He tried to grab her hands that were covering his mouth, it was only natural for a victim to struggle to break free. However, she had an iron grip on him. Hiiro could feel the pressure almost breaking his teeth.

*(W-What kind of brute strength does she have!?)*

Hiiro had no choice but to use his fist. However, she had reacted faster. Shamoe grabbed both of Hiiro’s hands and head butted him.

“Ga—!?”

Hiiro began to see stars from the considerable impact. Following this, the maid began to strangle him with both hands.

“Gu.....ga.....Ha.....—!”

She possessed a tremendous amount of force. If Hiiro had slackened his resistance even slightly, he would have been rendered unconscious instantly. As the situation would become really bad at the rate things were going, Hiiro invoked the previously set *Protect* without particular regard for the consequences.

The characters he wrote on his arm appeared with a *powa* as it exhibited its effects. Pale blue magic appeared before Hiiro's eyes.

*Bashin!*

Shamoe, noticing the magic, leaped backwards, away from the bed.

*“Gohogoho—!”*

While Hiiro had one eye closed, he coughed as he rubbed his neck.

*Gururururu*, Shamoe growled at Hiiro.

As if she were a famished beast, Shamoe growled as she slowly prowled around the room on all fours. She appeared to be searching for an opportunity to pounce on her target. Actually, that was exactly what she was doing. Her eyes were glaring at Hiiro, filled with killing intent.

*(...If I don't take this seriously, this could get pretty dangerous.....)*

Immediately jumping out of the bed, Hiiro grabbed the *Piercer* that was leaning against the bedside. Although Hiiro was wary of the opponent, Shamoe seemed to maintain a constant distance as she kept glaring at him with sharp eyes.

*(This fellow seems to have good intuition. She seems to be extremely wary of this magic barrier.)*

The *Word Magic* *Protect* would still remain active for a little longer. After receiving such a mysterious attack, Shamoe deemed that it was worthless to draw closer at this particular time, seemingly basing it on pure animalistic instinct.

As the standoff continued for a while, Hiiro used that opportunity to once again set the word *Protect* onto his arm. The instant Hiiro finished writing, the magic barrier that had been protecting him up until now disappeared.

In that instant, the maid's eyes flashed as she forcefully kicked the floor, launching herself towards Hiiro. While gritting his teeth, Hiiro took a stance as he prepared to swing his sword. However, in that moment...

*“Please wait!!”*

Suddenly, the door burst open as Silva stood in the doorway shouting. Hiiro's hands involuntarily paused. As Hiiro's resolve to attack faltered at Silva's words, he was utterly unable to avoid the approaching Shamoe's assault, his left shoulder being bitten as a consequence.

*“Gu—a!”*

His face distorted due to excruciating pain.

*“Gu..... t-this fucking—!”*

As he was being bitten, Hiiro activated the previously set character, *Speed* and began to fly forward with full force. Naturally, they moved with tremendous velocity.

*Baki—!*

*“Kyan—!”*

Shamoe, whose back collided with the wall at full force, involuntarily spat out saliva before collapsing directly onto the ground.

Hiiro used the word *Speed* in order to accelerate towards the wall. As Shamoe collided with the wall, Hiiro shoved the hilt of his katana into her stomach, inflicting some damage. It was obvious that the damage dealt was significant as her legs buckled and she tumbled to the floor.

Following this, her hair that was black returned to the same shade of pink that Hiiro noticed during their first meeting. Her kemonomimi and tail also retracted.

*“Haa, haa, haa.....”*

Hiiro staggered as he held his wounded arm.

*“Hiiro-sama!”*

Silva supported Hiiro from behind with both hands.

*“Ku.....Y-You better explain this, Jii-san.”*

As Silva made an apologetic expression, he returned a faint nod. Yet, the remaining resident of the mansion began to speak.

*“Let me take care of the explanations.”*

It was Liliyn. Wearing black negligee, she was carrying a plush teddy bear by the hand, the plushie’s neck having cotton spilling out of it. Although she wore a sleepy expression, after taking a glance at the unconscious Shamoe collapsed on the floor, she moodily grunted.

*“Silva, go carry Shamoe of to her room. After that, begin treating the boy.”*

*“As you command.”*

Quietly responding so, Silva let go of Hiiro as he carried Shamoe off to her room. Following this, Liliyn turned on the lights as she drew close to the sofa.

*“Now then, for the meantime sit down. I have a lot of explaining to do. Not to mention, I also have some things that I want to ask.”*

Her current expression was unlike the suspicious smile she wore during dinner. Her eyes were narrowed and her mouth was slightly pointed in seriousness.

Hiiro similarly sat down on the sofa while suppressing the pain. As it was just the two of them, he sat down so that they could converse face to face.

In that moment, Silva returned with what seemed like a first aid kit. In reality, he did not need to be treated. If he used the word `Heal` then Hiiro's wound would be neatly cured. Yet, as he could not afford to use his magic here, he had no choice but to accept the treatment.

As Hiiro was being bandaged by Silva, Liliyn began to speak once the treatment was over.

"I'll say this first. I apologize on behalf of our kin."

Hiiro thought this was slightly surprising. Ever since he met her, he thought that she was the type who would never offer apologies. As such, Hiiro could now determine that she was civilized, even if only slightly.

"Never mind that, just give me an explanation. Why the hell did she come here and attack me? Not to mention, her appearance....."

"Umu. Well, no need to rush. This was entirely caused by our carelessness. However, I'll still explain it to you."

As she said so, Silva, who had disappeared undetected, seemed to have gone to prepare tea as he returned and set down some tea in front of the two.

Liliyn took the tea with one hand, taking a sip before exhaling. Following this, she began to softly speak.

"I'm assuming that you already know that this place is the Demon World."

It seemed that the `Evila` call their own world the Demon World, the `Gabranth` call theirs the Beast World, and the `Humas` the Human World.

"Although those living on this continent are mainly `Evila`, there are some other races that secretly make their homes here."

This was not a particularly unusual story. There were some `Gabranth` who lived on the Human Continent and vice versa. As the Demon World had harsh environments and strong monsters, it seemed more likely that other races living on this continent were rare.

"As you can guess from the flow of the conversation, Shamoe isn't an `Evila`. Actually, in hindsight, perhaps saying that she's not a pure blood might be better."

"Pure?"

As he picked up an intriguing word, Hiiro echoed.

"Shamoe is a crossbreed between an `Evila` and a `Gabranth`, she's an abandoned child."

".....So she's a half?"

"Yeah. If we were to classify her, she's of the `Majuu` race."



As Hiirō contemplated about the existence of such a race, as it had explained Shamoe's kemonomimi and tail, he somehow accepted it.

“But when I first met her, she didn't have kemonomimi or a tail, right?”

Yes. If he was to say one or the other, she had the appearance of a normal person.

“Among the race known as the Majuu, they can be split into two types: those with strong Evila blood and those with prevalent Gabranth blood. Shamoe is of the Evila group, thus she normally doesn't have kemonomimi.”

“I see. So? The reason why it suddenly grew is?”

“We were careless. Tonight is the night of a full moon.”

“Ah?”

As Liliyn peered out the window, Hiirō followed suit. What he observed was certainly a full moon floating in the night sky. Its size was incomparable to Japan's moon as it was magnitudes larger.

“On nights of the full moon, it seems that the Gabranth blood strengthens. But don't misunderstand. Not all Majuus run wild like Shamoe. There are fellows who don't lose to either blood line, to the point that they can control it completely.”

In other words, Shamoe was simply still immature. It seemed that there were Majuus who have matured and have a full understanding of their bodies, thus being capable of controlling their blood. However, as Shamoe had not yet become an adult, she did not possess the mental strength capable of preventing herself from going wild.

“Although lately, it seems that she was able to control her urges. Perhaps because a lot happened today, her heart was uneasy.”

“My condolences.”

Silva lowered his head apologetically. It seemed that today was the very first time she had to serve a guest. In addition, as Silva, who she was constantly worried about, had finally returned from the toxic mountain, she seemed to be extremely distressed.

As her heart's stability had been impaired, she was unable to suppress her instincts unlike usual, which led to her assaulting Hiirō due to her going out of control.

“But still, why did she come to my room? You guys have also been attacked, right?”

“Yeah. Certainly, it's as you say. The one who's on the receiving end of these attacks is usually me, you know.”

“Well, I would rather enjoy it if I were the target of her assaults.”

“Shut it, pervert!”

“Giby—!”

Receiving a magnificent hook, Silva flew towards the bed. No matter where he was, Silva would remain Silva.

“Her Gabranth instincts are stronger than most. It often reacts to dangerous people. Thus out of those in this mansion, Shamoe’s target was basically me.”

Come to think of it, Silva indicated that Liliyn’s strength was on the level of making a dragon cry and beg. If this was true, then it was understandable that she would trigger the Gabranth’s instincts.

“But today.....a strange event happened.”

Saying so, Liliyn narrowed her eyes.

“Who Shamoe deemed as being dangerous was not me, but you.”

It suddenly occurred to Hihiro. It was certainly as Liliyn had indicated. Shamoe’s instincts had judged Hihiro to be of a greater threat than Liliyn.

“Certainly, there are many mysterious things about you. Even though you’re not of the Imp Race, you have their appearance. In addition, there’s the previous struggle with Shamoe.”

Thinking that he had been seen, Hihiro began tightly grinding his back teeth.

“You, I heard from Silva that you were a fire-user, yet there were no signs of flames. In spite of this, there’s still the presence of magic being used.”

“.....”

“Not to mention, those last movements. It felt like your power spiked for a brief moment. During that time, your arm also emitted a faint glow.”

As she said so, Liliyn pointed towards Hihiro’s arm.

“Instead of me, Shamoe deemed you more dangerous. Her instincts thought such to the extent of trying to kill you. That has not occurred even to me.”

She sounded a little angry. As she thought that Shamoe had chosen Hihiro over her, she displayed slight jealousy. However, it seemed that she was even more shocked when she witnessed Hihiro’s Word Magic.

“I’ll ask again, boy. Who in the hell are you?”



# Chapter 70: Little Girl – Strong? Weak?

This time she did not ask out of curiosity but out of wariness. Hihiro gulped and focused his gaze towards her.

*(Trying to fool her... might be dangerous.)*

He felt that this time she might force an answer out of him. He was not at fault this time around, but to them there was no doubt that his existence was far too strange.

Also, for some reason or another, there was something else that was bugging him. He decided that until he knew what that was, he wouldn't reveal anything about himself to them.

Before that, however, it was necessary to prepare some insurance for himself. Thinking that, Hihiro puts on a sharp expression and...

“You can't even properly discipline your own servants. I can't believe it.”

“What did you say...?”

Just like he expected, Liliyn knitted her brows with an unpleasant expression on her face as she glared at Hihiro.

“To think you'd express your hospitality towards a guest with this kind of poor behavior. I'm at a loss for words.”

“M-Muu...”

What Hihiro was saying was correct, and Liliyn couldn't retort.

“And on top of that, you demand I identify myself? Are you sleep talking, oi?”

Hihiro and Liliyn were glaring at each other and Silva, who was standing nearby, had a complicated expression on his face.

“Giving me some half-hearted apology. If you're going to apologize, how about you show me some sincerity”

“Ku...”

Even though she was at fault, Liliyn began to get irritated being told off so much by the rude and younger Hihiro.

Hihiro stared at that girl, as if observing her. Then suddenly, Hihiro got up and moved to the corner of the room, distancing himself from the two.

Not knowing what was going on, Liliyn held her breath and followed Hiiro with her eyes. Ignoring her gaze, Hiiro concentrated magic into his fingertip.

Obviously taking note of his actions, the glint in Liliyn's eyes grew stronger and Silva immediately stood in front of her as if to shield her.

*(Oh, this went rather well.)*

Smiling internally, he begins writing a word while making sure they couldn't see it. The word he wrote was Transfer . With this, it became possible for him to escape at any time.

In truth, his actions were a gamble. It would have been dangerous if they had assaulted him as soon as they sensed his magic. That was because he did not understand how strong Silva and Liliyn were. No, Liliyn was strong without a doubt. She carried an atmosphere similar to that Rarashik. If they fought head-on, Hiiro would have no chance of victory.

That was why Hiiro was extremely nervous while he was writing that word. Only he himself knew how relieved he was after he had finished writing it.

*(Now, I've got my insurance. Next is...)*

Hiiro wanted to ask about what was on his mind earlier. He shifted his gaze towards the two who were watching him make as little effort as possible.

“Oi, isn't there something you should be saying?”

If she didn't he would act according to the plan that he just came up with. His plan was that if they still emitted hostility towards him and refused to talk he will use Transfer , go to where Mikazuki was, then escape from the island.

It seemed that outside there were many monsters around Rank S loitering around, but Hiiro decided that would be much safer than staying here.

Hiiro put himself on guard while observing the two. And then...

“Nofofo, it is exactly as you say.”

With a faint smile, Silva got out of his battle stance and lightly bowed.

“O-Oi Silva...”

Watching his actions just now, even Liliyn's eyes became dots.<sup>2</sup>

“Ojou-sama, everything that Hiiro-sama has said is true.”

“Ha?”

“That individual is our guest. He is also the benefactor who saved my life. Return favor with favor, and return life with life. It would not do to forget that.”

“...”

“We invited him into this mansion, then we did something to test him and after that a servant of the mansion wounded him. Considering all of that, for us to behave in such a manner, it would do no good for Ojou-sama’s future nor Ojou-sama’s ambition.”

“...”

“Ojou-sama, I believe you know what it is that you must do.”

Liliyn became silent for a while after listening to Silva’s words. Hiiro stared at Liliyn without changing expression, but suddenly had a look of shock on his face.

As for why...

“Uu...”

Liliyn’s eyes were teary.

*(Eh? ...Ha? She’s crying?)*

Even Hiiro had not expected this situation and was taken aback.

It hadn’t gotten to the point where she was shedding tears, but she had the look of an upset child that was trying to hold it back, and...

“S-Shwut up! I know!”

She threw the doll in her hand towards Silva with a *dosu*<sup>3</sup> and sharply turned towards Hiiro.

“I’m sowwy! I was wrong! Forgib me!”

She didn’t bow her head, but looking at her pouting and her semi-desperate apology, she seemed to have lost all sense of maliciousness.

*(W-What’s with her... It’s almost as if...)*

“Nofofofofo! You are like a small child, crying in such a manner.”

Silva said what Hiiro wanted to say.

A fist sank into his gut *dosu* and Silva groaned and crumpled to the floor.

But looking at her, Hiiro thought she really was like a child. He had heard that she had lived a long life. By Silva’s manner of speaking, it seemed to be true.

However she didn’t get what she wanted, moreover she was scolded by one of her servants. The girl ended up showing an emotional side that didn’t match her age.

Looking at her, feelings of shame starting to build within Hiiro for fearing and being defensive against such a girl.

Though she was much older than he was, it seemed like she was still a child. She demanded someone to tell her something because she wanted to know, and she became emotional because someone scolded her.

That kind of child.

*(Oi oi, what about my resolution up until now...)*

He became less tense and his set word almost faded, so he hurriedly concentrated on it again. If he were to let it disappear without activating it, he would suffer a Rebound and for six hours he would be weakened and unable to use Word Magic. He definitely did not want that to happen.

However, he thought with this he'd be able to ask about what was on his mind earlier, so he began to talk.

“Can I have a moment?”

“W-What is it!?”

She looked at him with slightly inflamed eyes. He wasn't scared of her at all any more. If anything, right now the atmosphere around her would make most people want to pat her on the head and make her feel safe.

“Haa, well, what. I've accepted your apology for now, so about the topic from before...”

“Are you going to tell me!?”

She didn't suddenly change expression, but she spoke with a smile on her face. Seeing that, Hihiro made a bitter smile and...

“...Before that, tell me one thing.”

“Mu...”

She knitted her brows with an unpleasant expression, as if to say ‘you have more you want to say?’.

“Ojou-sama.”

Silva, who had suddenly resurrected, spoke out to calm Liliyn. She sighed and waved her hand.

“Okay okay, I understand. However, after I answer your question you will tell me about yourself, right?”

She glared at Hihiro with a look that could kill.

It may have been because he had seen her crying just now, but Hihiro did not feel intimidated at all. He could only see it as a child putting on airs.

“That depends on how you answer my question.”

“...Fun, very well. Unlike others, I am open-minded. I will let you ask your question first.”

Liliyn said so pompously, and Silva apologetically bowed his head.

“Then, my question. Akachibi, do you...”

“Wait.”

“What is it?”

“W-What did you say just now?”

“Ha?”

“W-What do y-you mean by A-Aka-Akachibi?”

Silva, who was standing next to her, was dripping sweat like a waterfall. He was panicking because it seemed like all Hell will break loose.

“Of course I’m referring to you. You have red hair and you’re a pipsqueak, therefore Akachibi.”

“Hohou... It seems like you want me to pulverize you into pulp...”

One could sense an odd aura rumbling behind her *gogogogogogo*, but the only one that noticed it and breaking into a cold sweat was Silva.

“What, you don’t like it?”

“Of course I don’t! Just who do you think I am!?”

“A crybaby brat.”

“Ugu<sup>4</sup>... Y-You...”

Liliyn’s face turned red and her eyes were full of rage.

“You hate it that much? Then how about Akaloli?”

“Ha? Hm? What did you say? ‘Akaloli’? What is a ‘Akaloli’, Silva?”

“Huh? H-Ha! Um, that is... Err, Akaloli is...”

In his heart he believed that it most likely referred to a red lolita, but he didn’t put it into words. Not knowing what to do, he desperately shifted his train of thought 180 degrees and thought deeply.

“Mumumu, yes! It’s that! ‘Akaloli’ is a compliment, Ojou-sama!”

“Mu? I-Is that so?”

“Y-Yes! According to rumors, ‘Akaloli’ is a name granted to sweet, beautiful ladies!”

“Hou, such a word is becoming popular outside, is it?”

She nodded in understanding. Hihiro stared at those two with a blank look on his face.

“T-Therefore, would it not be good to accept it?”

“M-Muu... Is that so...”

There was no such word as Akaloli. Why? Because Hihiro just made it up on the spot. It was also not a compliment. It was nothing more than an easy nickname for him to remember. Liliyn, ignorant of the ways of the world, had no way of knowing that.

“Umu, then I shall allow you to call me Akaloli! Because I am tolerant! Ahahahaha!”

“I-Isn’t that nice! Nofofofof!”

Silva could not help but think that he was glad Liliyn was so simple.

“Oi, can I ask already?”

“Mu? It’s fine, go ahead and speak.”

Hiiro finally felt relieved being able to return to the main topic.

“...Question. Are you the type that concerns yourself with and discriminates based on race?”

“Ha? What nonsense are you saying?”

Hiiro remained quiet and looked into her eyes. Liliyn received his gaze and made a serious expression.

“Fun, race doesn’t matter. I just like the strong. If there is any discrimination, it would be based only on strength and weakness, kozou<sup>5</sup>.”

Suddenly a cunning expression full of experience could be seen on her small face. Hiiro understood that the answer she came to was something she could state with confidence. He couldn’t believe this was the same girl that was teary due to getting scolded earlier.

“...I see.”

It wasn’t anything difficult. She was just a person that either had an interest in someone or didn’t, and whether that person was strong or not. She was a person that made decisions based only on that.

Silva looked at her with a gentle expression. It seemed like an expression one would have looking at his own daughter. Hiiro thought that it would be nice if he always acted like a regular adult, but also thought it was extremely unfortunate that Silva had a tendency to suddenly transform into a pervert.

*(They’re a bit different from Ossan and Muir, but it feels like it’d be fine to speak a little with these people. However, I’ll have to have them promise fist.)*

Thinking that, Hiiro placed his hand on the bandages Silva wrapped.

“Oi, before I tell you about myself, promise me that you won’t tell anyone.”

“Don’t look down on me. Do I look like that kind of loose-lipped woman, you insolent peasant!”

“Nofofofof! If Hiiro-sama demands it, I will take it with me to my grave.”

“...I got it.”

Hiiro slowly cut off the bandages. The other two looked at him with a confused expression on their faces.

“W-What are you—”

“Shut up and watch.”

Pishun<sup>6</sup>!

Hiiro disappeared in an instant and Liliyn and Silva's eyes were wide in surprise.

“Where are you looking?”

The two gasped and looked toward the direction his voice came from. For some reason Hiiro, who was standing in the corner of the room just now, was sitting on the sofa.

*(This should be enough, but I may as well fix this while I'm at it. Their surprised faces are fun to look at too.)*

Putting aside those two and looking at his shoulder which was still bleeding, Hiiro once again concentrated magic into his fingertips.

*(If it's a wound of this level I won't need two characters... No, before that...)*

He wrote some word on his arm. That word, however, seemed to be a trigger word and disappeared as if it were absorbed.

Afterward, he wrote Heal and activated it on his shoulder. The bite marks on his flesh slowly started to fade and returned to its normal state

Liliyn and Silva watched the scene in front of them frozen in surprise, as if time had stopped. Liliyn gasped and brought her hand to her chin with a deep look on her face and began muttering.

“Healing magic...? No, healing magic is light attribute magic. There is no way Evila can use it. I can't feel the power of light either. And that movement technique just now... What does it mean?”

As she was muttering, Hiiro's wound completely healed. Liliyn spoke to him with her hand still on her chin.

“Explain. What... was that just now?”

“Even if you ask me ‘what’, it was my magic.”

“...I mean, why does an Evila have... no, wait. I see. You, that's a Unique magic, isn't it?”

Silva, as if he had already realized, looked towards Hiiro and lightly nodded.

“Aah, that's right. It's called Word Magic. I can't explain it in detail, but it's omnipotence is its selling point.”

“Explain it to me.”

“I refuse. I don't have any obligation to tell you any more. Even this much is a great service.”

“Mu, you...”

Liliyn looked at him with a face obviously full of rage. Hiiro, however, ignored her and answered.

“Do you blab about your abilities to strangers? I only told you this much because I felt like it. I won't tell



you anything about my power beyond this. That's normal, isn't it?"

"Mu..."

Possibly because she realized that Hiiro's decision was correct her rage lessened, but apparently still wanting to hear an explanation she looked at him with impatience in her eyes. He could understand her curiosity, but he didn't plan on saying anything further.

In fact, he had only planned to speak up until that point. He had thought that if Liliyn was the type that was concerned over race he would just teleport and leave.

Like the Gabranth that sought war, if she was the type that thought her race was superior and had thoughts of destroying the other races there would definitely be conflict if he were to stay with them.

The result, however, was that Liliyn had no interest in race. She only thought of the strong and weak. It was simple, but it was an easy-to-understand answer, one which might give a favorable impression.

This was what Hiiro had wanted to know after hearing about Liliyn from Silva. He wanted to know her way of thinking and wanted to ask her while he was here.

"In other words, your magic is a Unique magic. You can create fire, you can increase your physical capabilities and you can even heal. In that case... I see, that appearance too?"

"Who knows?"

"There's nothing wrong with answering that much."

"I already told you, I'm not an Imp. That should be enough, right?"

"M... Mu."

Liliyn looked up at Hiiro while pouting. Unlike before, she looked like a child that just got her toy taken away from her, causing Hiiro to unconsciously feel less serious.

"Nofofofofo! I did not believe you to be an average person, but to think you were a user of Unique magic! Nofofofofo!"

"Eei<sup>7</sup> shut up, Silva! Aah, I want to know! I'll use force to—"

"That is no good, Ojou-sama. He is our guest. We have also caused him quite a bit of trouble."

"Mu..."

Liliyn couldn't retort to Silva's reasoning.

"Isn't it fine! This place is occupied by odd and eccentric people. Isn't that what you always say, Ojou-sama? Isn't it useless to inquire about every stranger you meet?"

"That's true, but... Mu."

However, it seemed like she couldn't help but be interested in someone as odd as Hiiro. She stared at him

while biting her nails.

At that moment, Hiiro was smiling on the inside.

*(Alright, seems like it went well.)*

From his point of view, he could see something about Liliyn and Silva. It was their   Status   .

When he used   Heal       he immediately activated   Pry       which he had set beforehand. He couldn't find an opening to use it during the meal, however, he used the opportunity earlier to activate both words. That way they wouldn't doubt him when he used   Pry       .

On another note, when he activated the two-character word the words that he had set previously disappeared, but this was the word that he had set prior to activating   Heal       . It was so that they wouldn't sense anything odd when he activated it.

LILIYN LI REYSIS REDROSE	Lv. 148
<div>HP: 6733/6733</div> <div>MP: 5876/5876</div> <div>EXP: 2796139</div> <div>NEXT: 98022</div>	<div>ATK: 977</div> <div>DEF: 944</div> <div>AGL: 1159</div> <div>HIT: 1220</div> <div>INT: 1476</div>
<div>Magic Attribute None</div> <div>Magic Dream Illusion Magic Dream Eater, Bewitching Confinement, Ethereal Construction</div> <div>Titles One Who Lives Among Illusions, Little Girl, Crybaby, Connoisseur of Wine, Seeker, Manipulator, Monster Slayer, Killer of the Unique, Demon Who Shreds, Transcendent, Permanence Devil, Redrose Witch, One Who Seeks the Strong, An Unusual Person</div>	

SILVA PLUTIS	Lv. 80
<div>HP: 1250/1250</div> <div>MP: 6000/6000</div> <div>EXP: 604441</div> <div>NEXT: 23000</div>	<div>ATK: 430</div> <div>DEF: 355</div> <div>AGL: 490</div> <div>HIT: 333</div> <div>INT: 1000</div>
<div>Magic Attribute Dark</div>	

Magic Pool Ball Dark, Attack, Dark Gate Dark, Movement, Black Out  
Dark, Attack, Fear Cremation Dark, Attack, Shadow Creation Dark

Titles Spirit of Darkness, Tribe That Sees, Heretic, Perverted Butler, Immortal  
Lolicon, Playboy, Feminist, Sexual Harassing Old Man, The Enemy? Ally? of Women,  
Sage, Omnipotent, Pacifist, Faithful, White-Haired Demon, The Strongest Shield

# Chapter 71: The Little Girl's Invitation

*(There's plenty that I want to retort on, but why are the little girls of this world so strong...?)* Rarashik, who he had scanned a while ago, had also crossed level 100. And the little girl in front of him had god-class strength. What was more...

*(And her having no attribute means she uses a unique magic like me...)* She was the first unique magic user he had ever met, apart from himself. He had no idea just how powerful Phantasm Magic was, but according to Arnold, every unique magic was extremely powerful. Her magic probably held something that allowed her to overwhelm her opponents.

*(And that Silva is... a Spirit of Darkness ?)*

Seeing the words on his list of titles made Hiiro hold his breath. He was able to take on the parasitic cactus's poison without batting an eye, so Hiiro knew he was no ordinary person. But according to his title, he was one of the Spirits .

Hiiro never thought he would be a Spirit. That was actually more surprising than the unique magic. His appearance was that of your average, everyday old man, but he wasn't an Evila , or a Humas . He was a Pheom .

*(A user of unique magic, an Evila and Gabranth cross, and a Pheom . What the hell is up with this mansion...)* Silva did say that this was the dwelling of eccentric people, but it seemed he wasn't exaggerating. What was more, Hiiro himself was an otherworlder with unique magic; a person fitting of this place. The mansion was full to the brim of surprises.

But looking at the two's Statuses was a big help. Though he was a little shocked, having information would make his life easier. If they were to ever have to fight, he would be able to come up with countermeasures more easily.

Of course, he would lose if he attacked head-on, but there were plenty of approaches he could take with the information he gained. As he was thinking along those lines, Liliyn speak.

“Well, there is some sense in what you're saying.”

“That's correct. Hiiro-sama is, to put it briefly, someone who is very similar to us.”

“Fumu.”

Liliyn turned her eyes to Hiiro once more and began observing him. And after watching him for a while, she nodded lightly and broke out in a smile.

When Hiiro questioned her actions mentally, Liliyn suddenly thrust her finger at him and spoke words he hadn't expected.

“Okay, kozou. Become mine.”

The sudden turn of events put even Hiiro in shock. Silva shrugged his shoulders, and sighed.

“What are you saying? Of course, I won’t. I refuse.”

“I refuse your refusal!”

“...What?”

She said it proudly, while sticking out her chest.

*(This brat, what is she trying to do? Did she hit her head somewhere?)* “I’m perfectly sane, you fool.”

“...Hm? Ah...”

It seemed that he had unintentionally spoken the words from his heart. Because of the sudden invitation, his mind was in a bit of disorder.

“According to Silva, you are on a journey. Put an end to that, and come serve me.”

“Hell no, brat.”

“What do you mean by brat! Even though I look like this, I’ve lived several hundred years, kozou!”

As Hiiro had guessed, her age far exceeded her appearance. Even so, as with Rarashik, having a little girl look down on him really pissed him off.

“Then granny.”

“Say another word, and you’ll be seeing a nightmare you’ll never wake up from.”

She began letting out a serious amount of killing intent. It seemed that it would be difficult for an ordinary person to even stand in the face of it. Hiiro felt sweat gradually gathering on his back.

*(So Granny is taboo. Then as with the Chibi-Usagi, I probably shouldn’t use the word Little Girl.)* She didn’t seem to know the meaning of ‘Loli’, so Akaloli seemed to work just fine.

“...Anyways, if you’re recruiting, go ask elsewhere. I don’t want to serve anyone.”

“And that’s why you’re on a journey?”

“Right. I plan on seeing the world. I won’t let anyone get in my way.”

Neither side would back down. Their eyes met and sparks flew. Finally, Liliyn smiled once more.

“Kukuku, you said that before me without showing a sign of fear. You’ve truly peaked my interest.”

It appeared that instead of getting hated, Hiiro had merely increased her interest in him.

“As I thought, you should become mine, Hiiro Okamura.”

“And am I not rejecting your offer here?”

Liliyn puckers her lips, and made an unpleasant expression.

“Hmph, so where do you plan on heading from here?”

“Is that related to you in any way?”

“It appears that he was searching for a town.”

Hiiro turned his glare to Silva. Hiiro clicked his tongue as the pervert mouthed unnecessary things. Liliyn thought for a bit, and widened her smile once more.

“A town... did you not know? There are no towns here.”

“I know. There’s one far, far away, right?”

“No, by here, I mean... You’re an Evila, yet you don’t know? Kukuku, you’re a stranger existence than I first thought.”

She laughed loudly and shivers ran down Hiiro’s back.

“What are you trying to say?”

Asking that probably wasn’t the best idea.

“There’s only a single town that can be called as such in the entire Demon World. There’s no way you wouldn’t know... if you were an Evila. No, even if you were just someone who lived on this continent.”

She took on a triumphant expression as she looked down on Hiiro. But Hiiro being as he was, did not display any expression on his face. Inside his head, he was a bit startled.

*(Only one town? Right, Silva called it not a town, but a settlement.)* Far, far away, there was not a town, but a settlement. Silva said as such. Even so, why was there but a single town? Hiiro’s curiosity was alight.

“Hmm, it seems you really didn’t know. I see... Kukuku.”

Liliyn nodded her head over and over. She constantly gazed in Hiiro’s direction.

“It seems you’re curious, so let me teach you.”

Her superiority complex was quite clear in her words. But since Hiiro had a desire to obtain the information, he held himself back.

As he stayed silent, Liliyn arbitrarily continued the conversation.

“Listen here. The Demon World has many settlements, but all of them have low populations. The amount of Evila races is high, but the actual numbers within races is scarce. They don’t have any large-scale settlements that can be called something like a town. Do you know why? In general, the Evila stick within their own races, and they have a high level of pride. Though a classification has been set up for the Evila race, few actually care about it. A small number of a single race is unable to assert itself as a

town.”

Inevitably, instead of being called towns, there were only small communities formed by the members of a single race.

“Even the most numerous Imp Race has numbers less than one hundred. Of course, with a hundred, they could build a village, but the Imps don’t have such motivations. No, none of the other races have any such motivations either. They just live by gathering together. That’s the Evila way of life.”

Hihiro didn’t know the Evila had such a trait. Though there were plenty of races, interracial populations were low, so they couldn’t build anything like a city. If the races were to gather and work together, it would be a different story, but most of them didn’t interact with each other.

“But there is a single exception. That is the one I told you about, the single town. No, the capital.”

“... Demon Capital   Xaos .”

“Oh, so you already knew.”

What came to mind was the Demon Capital   Xaos . It seemed that it was a place separate from the rest of the continent.

“Right, only the Demon Capital is different. Long ago, the first one to call themselves the Demon Lord created it. There, various races of Evila make their homes.”

“The Demon Lord gathered them to protect the capital?”

“I see you’re quick on the uptake. But that’s not all. It seems that the Demon Lord delighted in associating with strong individuals.”

“By the way, by associating, she means XXXXXXXX<sup>8</sup>. Nofofofof.”

Hihiro and Liliyn’s faces were dyed a light shade of red. They glared at the pervert with their eyes half closed. It was not that the context was hard to understand, but Silva didn’t really have to put it into words. It was irritating.

“*Ahem.* Anyways, that’s how it is. The Demon Lord traversed the Demon World, and invited all the strong individuals the person could find.”

“Oi, won’t most people reject an offer like that.”

“Yes, but most knew who they were dealing with.”

“...?”

“The Demon Lord possessed an enormous amount of power, she was quite a beauty.”

“Beauty? Was the Demon Lord not a man?”

“Nope, she was female.”



“ ... ”

“Her appearance was flowing with elegance, and regardless of the gender of whoever she was dealing with, she was able to steal their hearts. And she was also strong, with an overwhelming amount of charisma. There were few, if any, men who could refuse a request from her.”

# Chapter 72: The Visiting Red Rain

“...Haa, so basically, the Demon Lords gathered all the powerful and famous men in the Demon World and made themselves a harem?”

“Kukuku, well that’s about right.”

“And so the offspring born during this time prospered and are right now living in the Demon Capital Xaos ?”

“You’re a clever boy. That’s precisely it.”

When the Demon Lord position was filled by a woman, men and children of various races across the Demon World became united. As their descendants gradually increased, they slowly began to form what was known as a country. This would certainly explain the circumstances as to how the Evila , who did not believe in coexistence with other races, formed a country.

In other words, that city was filled with many Evila who had inherited the blood of the Demon Lord.

“I get it. So the current Demon Lord—actually, not just him—the entire populace has the previous Demon Lord’s blood flowing through their veins, right?”

“Well, kinda. It’s not unusual to encounter people of other races who have migrated there as the capital accepts anyone, regardless of race. There are no average people there. I mean, there are even some bizarre freaks lurking about.”

Liliyn stared at Hihiro, as if indicating that he was a prime example of this, yet—

*(As opposed to me, this brat is even more eccentric but...there’s also that pervert over there...)*

Silva, noticing Hihiro glancing at him, emitted a complacent smile. If put succinctly, Hihiro though it was creepy.

“Now then, let’s address the main issue. You, who didn’t know anything about the town, er, country that any Evila should know, are making your way towards it? You do know that the country was involved in a war just a month ago, right?”

Indeed. About a month prior, the Demon Capital Xaos gathered its martial forces in preparation for the war against the Gabranth . Although war was easily prevented by the Demon Lord’s conduct, it was not difficult to expect that this problem would cause all hell to break loose in the future.

“Not to mention, I’ve heard that they’ve started up something with the Humas .”

“What was that?”

This was the first time he heard of such a thing. The reason they destroyed the bridge located on the

Gabranth border was so they could avoid war. As such, Hiiro could not comprehend the reason why they had decided to involve themselves with the Humas this time.

“Are they planning on warring with the humans now?”

“Nn? Aa, no, you’re mistaken. The way I phrased it was misleading, huh. It seems that they’re trying to form an alliance with the Humas .”

“...Is that true?”

Liliyn slightly raised both arms and shrugged her shoulders as she spoke.

“Who knows? It’s merely a rumor. I only heard that this was apparently declared during the Demon Lord’s speech. Well, seeing as how the current Demon Lord is as sweet as honey, it seems plausible.”

“Seems like they’re quite a forgiving.”

“Not really. There were many who had their friends and family killed by the Humas . In the middle of this despair came the alliance. Also, the one who advocated it was the little girl known as the Demon Lord.”

“Hey, wait a minute! Is the Demon Lord a female?”

“Aa, though the previous one was male. The one right now is the little girl Eveam, that guy’s daughter.”

Little girl<sup>9</sup>. It couldn’t be helped that Liliyn would call most women as such. However, this was the first time that Hiiro heard about the Demon Lord being a woman. As the Demon Lord was often portrayed as a male in games, Hiiro arbitrarily assumed that was their gender.

“Currently, the capital might be in a considerable uproar. The Evila there consider themselves as the supreme power. Even during the war with the Gabranth , there are many that believed they would have won were it not for the Demon Lord’s interference. Also, there’s the proposed alliance. This in itself is enough of a reason for all of their frustrations to explode. In the event that it does detonate, it’s entirely possible that riots will break out in the near future. Are you really planning on going to such a dangerous country, boy?”

Hiiro knew she began the discussion with the intention of not letting him go. However, there was some truth in what Liliyn said. Should Hiiro head to the capital at such a time and find himself caught up in the riots, it was possible that it would become very troublesome. It was also the home turf of the Demon Lord. Furthermore, it was certain that there would be people of greater levels than Hiiro, possessing mountainous strength.

Attempting to collect information inconspicuously under such circumstances would be quite a challenge. Of course, Hiiro could accomplish it were he to make good use of his Word Magic , however, he understood that it was the way of the world to preserve his use of magic only in particularly irregular situations.

Hiiro somehow vaguely realized that, ever since he was summoned, he seemed to be a presence that often got caught up in problems and turmoil. He could not deny the possibility that he would become involved

in something troublesome should he go towards the capital.

*(I wanted to see the country at least once though...)*

No matter what one said, it was still the capital of the Demon World. He could somehow stipulate that this continent's size was on a different scale when compared to the human and beast countries. It was precisely because of this that Hiiro wanted to experience it for himself, even if only once.

As it was such a huge continent, Hiiro thought that it would definitely be full of delicious food and valuable books. It was without a doubt a place that he wanted to check out for himself.

*(Yeah, especially the books. I've heard that they have 'that' over there...)*

As Hiiro made a contemplative face in silence, he casually glanced outside the window. What appeared before him were mountains and a sky being filled with a white glow. It seemed that day had apparently arrived. It appeared that they had been talking for a long period of time. Yet, in that instance, Hiiro noticed something strange.

Although the bright light of day could be seen from far away, it had yet to enter the vicinity of the mansion. As he began contemplating what on earth this could mean—

*Guraguraguragura<sup>10</sup>!*

The mansion began to suddenly sway significantly. As Hiiro realized what was happening, he began to brace himself in response to the vibrations. Yet, as he saw Liliyn's nonchalant demeanor, Hiiro gave off a dubious expression as he stared at her in wonder.

"I see, well, it's not really a disaster, it's kind of like an event that occurs often around here, it's the way of the world."

"Indeed, that is correct."

It seemed that the two were familiar with the swaying. This could be determined as there was no signs of panic visible from either of them.

After a while, the vibrations slowly decreased before fading away completely. Liliyn folded her arms as she began to converse with Silva.

"I wonder how long it will be this time?"

"I am also curious. As the last time was 3 days, would this time not be even longer?"

"Reasoning?"

"Although the argument supporting this is that the shaking lasted longer than the previous time, it seems that..."

Silva drew close to the window, gazing at the sky while spewing out words.

"It seems that the size of the Forbidden Emperor Cloud <sup>11</sup> is larger than the previous time."

“Forbidden Emperor Cloud?”

As Hiiro heard an unfamiliar word, he involuntarily let them leak from his mouth.

“Kukuku, I see. If you don’t know, then I’ll tell you.”

She was a fellow whose way of speaking seemed to always elicit irritation. Yet, as Liliyn joyfully deflected Hiiro’s gaze, she began to speak her answer.

“The thing referred to as the Forbidden Emperor Cloud is a red cloud positioned high above this very mansion.”

“Red cloud?”

“Instead of words, it’d probably be better for you to see it with your own eyes.”

As she said so, Hiiro approached the window in a similar fashion to Silva as he looked up toward the sky. In doing so, he literally saw red clouds blanketing the skies. Following this, Red Rain<sup>12</sup>, which was considered rare in this world, began to fall.

As Hiiro’s eyes were mesmerized by the Red Rain that he had seen for the first time, he simply stood there, rooted in that singular spot. However, as he had heard the previous exchange between Silva and Liliyn, he realized that this rain was likely the cause of the vibrations. Although the rain was undoubtedly bizarre, the matter of whether it was the cause of the mansion’s shaking was questionable.

And yet, as if preemptively addressing Hiiro’s misgivings, Silva answered.

“This Red Rain barely encompasses the area surrounding this island. That is to say, this rain only falls upon the lake.”

“Why doesn’t it rain on the island?”

“The Forbidden Emperor Cloud seems to be a cloud that consists of evaporated red rain. The evaporated water rises through the air and swirls into a cloud and, after a substantial amount of time passes, falls back down to earth in the form of rain. Well, if I told you to think that it ‘comes and goes’, would it be easier to understand?”

“I see. While I don’t understand why the rain falls in such a manner, it’s true that, from what I can see, it doesn’t seem to be raining on the island.”

No matter from what angle he looked, Hiiro could not see the sight of the windows and the garden or earth outside being drenched due to the rain. It seemed that it did not rain on the island, as Silva had indicated.

“But you know, the color is not the only thing about the Red Rain that is different than normal. There is one other unique trait that it possesses.”

“Trait?”

“It makes magic ineffective. Basically, it has the power of a magic seal.”

The one who had answered was Liliyn. As Hiiro shifted his gaze toward her, Liliyn began to move her

mouth.

“It seems that when this rain begins pouring, magic cannot be used within the vicinity. Although the reason for this is still unknown, during my time on this island, there have been no exceptions to this, including us. I dare you to try.”

Being told thus, Hihiro attempted to concentrate magic into his fingertips as per usual.

*(...Nn?)*

His fingertips became slightly warm as they glowed with a pale light as normal, yet, no matter how much Hihiro concentrated, nothing happened. He tried to write a word in the air, yet nothing was projected.

In addition, it had suddenly occurred to him that he could no longer ascertain Mikazuki's location. As Hihiro had previously set words onto Mikazuki, he could grasp her general location by sensing his magic. However, at the moment, he could not feel a thing.

*(It...it's been canceled? Moreover, it was by force?)*

Hihiro's thoughts were on the mark. From what Silva had said, this rain was called Magic Cancellor. It seemed to possess the effect of forcibly shutting down magic. As such, those who were near the rain were deprived of the use of magic.

In this situation, it was not possible for Hihiro to write and set words on his body for protection. As he couldn't believe that such a strange rain existed, Hihiro instinctively clicked his tongue.

*(No.....isn't that wrong?)*

It was then that Hihiro suddenly had an epiphany. The reason that he felt the set words disappear was due to the risk associated with writing two words with Word Magic which he had done earlier. If he wrote two words, all one-word spells set would disappear. He had forgotten about it.

*(However, even if I didn't use the Double Chain <sup>13</sup> skill, does this mean that they would still disappear even in this rain.....ah, wait a sec!)*

While making sure his concern did not appear on his face, he peered at his own body, exhaling in relief as he took note of his skin tone. This alleviation was due to the Change word's effect had not disappeared. Therefore, he felt secure as his appearance remained one belonging to the Imp Race. If he were to return to being human now, he would not be able to make up an excuse.

*(But even so, what the hell does this mean...?)*

It was at this point that Hihiro began to contemplate the differences between his prepared words and Liliyn's barrier magic with the spell Change. While the fact that both groups were magic remain unchanged, the former continued to maintain its effects by using magic as fuel while the latter has already produced its results, meaning that the spell had already been cast.

*(So magic effects that are fixed seem to be unaffected. It seems that the scratches from the maid have been cured as well.)*

If indeed all magic that had been cast was canceled indiscriminately, then his shoulder, wounded by Shamoe's assault last night, should have scratches re-appearing as the Heal word's effect would disappear..

In other words, rather than sealing magic itself, it suppressed the emission of magic. In other words, magic itself.

*(Apparently, instead of sealing magic, it seems to seal the use of magic power.)*

However, this consequentially benefited Hiiro. It was obviously for the better that Hiiro had not returned to his human appearance. Even so, he was amazed at the existence of such an environment.

*(The demon world....it's really a place where you can't get bored, huh.)*

Although the demon world's environment was just that, to Hiiro, it was completely different to what he had experienced before. He couldn't possibly imagine that an environment would render him unable to use magic. As this became a matter of life and death for Hiiro, he sincerely thought from the bottom of his heart that it was good for him to find out about the red rain.

If he fought a monster without knowing this and this rain began to fall in the vicinity, he would be left confused as to why his magic was suddenly rendered ineffective, that confusion could possibly allow a monster to deprive Hiiro of his life. It was precisely because of this that Hiiro genuinely welcomed this experience.

"I understand that I can't use magic when this rain is nearby. So what happens if I touch it?"

When near such rain, magic becomes unusable. If he should touch it, it was possible that some corresponding side effects could assault his body. Concerned, Hiiro posed such a question, yet Silva's answer was surprising.

"What Hiiro-sama is concerned about will not occur."

"So if I touch it, I won't get a curse or anything similar?"

Although Hiiro thought he had a little bit of a 'gamer brain', in this world, it was better to be err on the side of caution.

"There is no such thing. If you were only to touch, then no problem should arise."

The way he phrased his answer caught Hiiro's attention. While Hiiro was sceptical as to whether there was something else to be wary of, he stared at Silva.

"It is true that Red Rain certainly possesses characteristics similar to water. However, unlike normal water, Red Rain possesses considerable weight."

"Weight? You mean, it's heavy?"

"You are correct. In addition, it pelts down from high above in the sky. If one were to be rained upon, the shock received would be quite significant. Therefore, I believe that trying to pass through that rain would prove....quite traumatizing, yes?"



“.....”

He felt that the trauma one would experience would not be to the extent where it could be expressed with the word ‘painful’. However, it was undeniable that, from what Hihiro could see, the rain did not seem to torrent down with a *zaza*<sup>14</sup>. And yet, the sound of the rain was as large as the Guerrilla Rainstorm<sup>15</sup>. Evidently, every single droplet seemed to carry an immense impact.

“Come to think of it, you didn’t answer my question earlier. What was that shaking a little while ago?”

“Aa, that was the aftermath of the barrier that the ojou-sama prepared being dissolved.”

“Barrier? Now that you mention it, you guys did say something about that earlier.”

“Indeed. During the night, the surroundings are full of Rank S monsters as a large amount of them make to inhabit this area. Although if we were to be attacked, Ojou-sama would undoubtedly have no problems, however, as she dislikes having her sleep disturbed, she set up the barrier in order to repel those monsters from entering the premises.”

It was true that disturbing someone’s sleep could not be forgiven. Hihiro could completely understand this sentiment.

“The barrier is also made up of magic. Thus, as the Red Rain forcibly canceled the barrier, the mansion shook in recoil. There is no need for concern. However...”

Silva abruptly narrowed his eyes as he shifted his line of sight toward the outside of the window.

*Gugyagyagyagya~~~~!!!*

A deafening howl could be heard. As tension involuntarily ran throughout his entire body, Hihiro peered out the window in a similar fashion as Silva. Liliyn, the only one who had her arms folded and eyes closed, exhaustingly spat out a sigh as she slowly opened her eyes.

“As I thought, he came...Baron Bone Lizard.”

# Chapter 73: SS-Ranked Demon

As soon as the group heard the cry, they exited the mansion in order to confirm what it was. As soon as they passed the doorway, they could see something rising from the red lake.

“T-That thing...”

Baron Bone Lizard. That was the monster’s name. Hiiro had never heard that monster’s name before, however, unknown monsters like this were to be expected. That aside, the atmosphere around this monster was similar to something that he had encountered before.

*(No, this presence.)*

The monster definitely had an atmosphere different from other monsters Hiiro had encountered, yet, for some reason, it felt familiar to him. It was clear that the ‘Baron Bone Lizard’ wasn’t a monster that he had encountered before.

During his time in Japan, there was a TV show that talked about reptiles similar to komodo dragons. The contours and physique of this monster were the same, however, its size was beyond comprehension.

It was at least 10 meters long. Furthermore, it had no muscle nor meat, making it unclear as to how it was capable of movement. Its whole frame was constructed out of bones. It looked as if a dinosaur fossil at a museum had just come back to life.

The bones were pure bright red. It emitted a crimson glow that one could use to clearly identify it in the middle of the night.

“For fuck’s sake, even though this mutant usually stays holed up in the bottom of the lake—”

Liliyn spoke with a displeased expression.

“For it to come out at this time. What an annoying bunch of bones.”

When Hiiro heard those words—

*(Usually at the bottom? Doesn’t that mean it rose up to the surface because the Red Rain appeared?)*

From his analysis, Hiiro knew that the current situation was quite treacherous. This was mainly due to his magic being rendered unusable. If it was a normal monster, he would have very little issue beating it with Thorn Sword Piercer. However, the monster before him was anything but. As he contemplated, he inhaled sharply as he suddenly remembered.

*(This feeling, it’s the same feeling I felt before against that guy.)*

Recalling those memories, Hiiro involuntarily shuddered as he unconsciously stepped backwards. This was caused by trauma he had received earlier, yet he didn’t take his eyes off of it as he cleared his throat.

*(Fu, no doubt, this atmosphere is that of an SS-ranked monster.)*

When Hiiro separated from Arnold and Muir, he encountered a monster by accident. It was a monster called the Duke Eagle . After coming to this world Edea , it was the first time that he had fought with his life on the line.

The Duke Eagle was an SS-ranked monster. It wasn't a monster that Hiiro, who was around level 50 at the time, could face by himself. Although he was fortunate as he managed to repel the monster, it was a life and death experience.

Now, a monster possessing a similar foreboding atmosphere to that previous encounter was right before his eyes. That was the Baron Bone Lizard

*(This is bad...this is really bad...)*

He had leveled up since then, however, without his magic, he could do little. At his current level, he would be able to face an S-ranked monster normally. However, without his magic, he wouldn't stand a chance against this monster.

Just as Hiiro clenched his teeth and tried to come up with a plan to escape, the Baron Bone Lizard opened its mouth wide. Unsure of what it was going to do, Hiiro looked at it in a daze

*Kyiiiiiiiii!*

It made a faint buzzing sound that reverberated throughout the surrounding area. Then, a red orb appeared in front of its open mouth, gradually increasing in size.

“To start off with a such a bold move, what did it think this place was?”

A displeased, unsurprised expression appeared on her face. Her level was over 100. However, as she was incapable of utilizing any magic in this situation, she could only resort to physical attacks. Unsure of where her composure came from, Hiiro scowled.

“Silva, give me that.”

“Here it is.”

Obedying her orders, Silva, who was beside her, took out something from his chest. It was something that Hiiro was quite familiar with.

*(That's...the Golden Rose ?)*

Indeed, it was as Hiiro had thought. The object was what had been on top of the Cactus Man's head when they were passing through Venom Mountain , the Golden Rose . This was something that Liliyn had ordered Silva to retrieve.

*(But why take the rose out now...?)*

In the instant that Hiiro attempted to understand what Liliyn was going to do, she surprised him by munching on the Golden Rose .

*(She...ate it!?)*

Hiiro didn't expect her to eat it and just stared blankly at her. She continued chewing and then.

Gokuri<sup>16</sup>

It didn't look like she enjoyed it, yet, it was clear that it had entered her stomach. She then proceeded to look at the Baron Bone Lizard with a keen eye.

"I'm still sleepy. I'll have you disappear quickly you pile of bones."

In spite of this, the one that had made the first move was the Baron Bone Lizard. The red orb that was over one meter in diameter suddenly shrunk to about a sphere with a diameter of 30 centimeters.

*(It condensed its power?)*

It probably planned to shoot it like a bullet. Yet, it was clear that what the monster had produced wasn't just a mere bullet. It was definitely something much more powerful.

(From what I can remember, I think the Duke Eagle used something similar.)

Due to Hiiro's experience, he was able to predict that the Baron Bone Lizard was about to do something dangerous. He felt sweat flowing down his spine.

"Hey kozou, move out of the way."

"Hey, you."

"Just be good and move aside. I know you're strong but stand back and watch my fight."

Saying so, Liliyn jumped in front of Hiiro and faced the Baron Bone Lizard.

"Hey!"

"Hiiro-sama, please come over here."

All of a sudden, Silva moved beside Hiiro, proposing so as he bowed his head.

Hiiro accepted his proposal and stepped aside. He looked at Liliyn with doubt as she took on a SS-ranked monster by herself.

*(You can't use magic right now!)*

Even though she had Unique Magic, no matter how powerful it may be, she couldn't use it right now. Both Silva and Liliyn herself should know this as well. And yet, she proceeded with her reckless actions.

Hiiro himself was an irregular existence, however, it seemed that there were people even more abnormal.

Despite Hiiro's concerns, Liliyn looked forward as she smiled fearlessly.

"Fuwa~ Hurry up and come at me small fry."

A *clack* sound was heard, perhaps induced by Liliyn’s yawn.

*GuGyaGyaGyaGyaGya*<sup>17</sup>

The condensed red orb flew at Liliyn.

*Shuiiiiiiiiiiii*<sup>18</sup>!

The orb came at Liliyn with tremendous speed. Without losing her smile, she casually held her right hand towards the orb.

A noise that sounded like something splitting could be heard upon collision as something flew out in response.

*Gusa*<sup>19</sup>!

At that moment, something golden had appeared in the center of the orb.....

.....a golden spike appeared in the center of the orb that the Baron Bone Lizard released.

# Chapter 74: The Origin of the Red Rain

The metal spike's size was enormous, its magnitude so large that a normal person would be rendered unable to deal with it.

The spike pierced the orb, pinning it to the ground. Unable to move, the orb slowly collapsed.

*(What, what is that? Where did it come from?)*

Hiiro looked towards the direction where the spike flew from. In other words, he looked towards the sky. However, all he could see was the blanketing red cloud. There was nobody there.

Due to this, one could only wonder who had caused the orb to stop moving. As Hiiro thought, he could only come to the conclusion that it could not be anyone else but Liliyn. As she continued to emit her fearless smile, she flexed her finger towards the ground. In doing so— *Gusagusagusagusagusagusa* —!

Once again, nails began to appear in the sky. Moreover, this time there were multiple nails. Those golden spikes began to pierce and embed themselves into the Baron Bone Lizard's body, one after another.

Witnessing such a scene, Hiiro was stunned as he simply stared. He had absolutely no clue what had just taken place. Before he was aware of it, the orb from earlier had disappeared. The monster holding a rank of SS was immobilized as its entire body was punctured by countless spikes that had lashed out at it.

The sensation of imminent threat that Hiiro had felt earlier had completely disappeared in an instant, as if it were simply a passing breeze.

“Gu.....Gii.....Gaa.....”

The Baron Bone Lizard desperately attempted to move its body, yet, above it were incoming spikes flying towards it. In addition, the spikes were even larger than the previous ones. As there were a multitude of spikes, varying in sizes and lengths, it could be determined that more and more bones inside of its body would be broken. Its tail was pulverized from its roots. Even the limbs that supported its body were brutally and cruelly shattered.

What had stolen Hiiro's vision in the next moment was the sight of pitch-black wings growing on Liliyn's black, her figure afloat in midair. Her crimson, blood-like long hair swayed. The rear figure of the girl who possessed obsidian wings that seemed to encompass everything resembled a demon that often appeared in anime or games.

“Now then.....this should finish it.”

Liliyn brought her hand to the sky before swinging it down like a whip in the direction of the Baron Bone Lizard.

*Pakipakipakipaki—!*

A single, massive spike appeared, its magnitude easily capable of obliterating the Baron Bone Lizard's body. It fell on top of the monster's head, shattering it to smithereens as it generated a tremendous shock wave.

The shock wave was so powerful, the debris came flying towards them. Similar to the orb from earlier, after a while it collapsed as if it were sand before being blown away by the wind.

The monster was completely stunned.

“Now, I guess it's about here, huh.”

As if she had just finished her shift at work, Liliyn indifferently spat out those words.

*Pachin<sup>20</sup>!*

She lightly snapped her fingers. Then—

*Piki.....Pikiki.....Pariiiiiin!*

As Hiiro thought that the surrounding space had cracks appearing through, a tone that resembled glass breaking resounded.

“What!?”

Hiiro looked around him restlessly. The whole scene returned to what it was before the body of the Baron Bone Lizard had appeared. The Forbidden Emperor Cloud was still present and the Red Rain continued to pelt down upon the empty field before him.

The shattered remains of the Baron Bone Lizard lay at the center of the field. All the golden spikes that Liliyn used in her assault had disappeared and the ground was completely intact.

“.....?”

Unable to logically analyze the situation, Hiiro stared at the situation with a confused expression. Ignoring Hiiro, Liliyn retracted her wings and landed on the ground as if nothing happened.

“Clean that up. I'm going to sleep.”

“Understood. Have a good night, Ojou-sama.”

As expected, Silva nodded his head as he acknowledged her order. While Hiiro was looking at Liliyn's back, she turned around and said.

“What do you think? I'm strong, right kozou? Fufu~n.”

She said with an air of superiority. Looking at the dumbfounded Hiiro, she smiled with satisfaction as she entered the house.

As ordered by his master, Silva approached the shattered bones of the bone lizard.

“Hey, are you sure it’s alright to approach it?”

“Yes, it has already been annihilated.”

“A-Annihilated? So it’s dead? You’re saying it died?”

Hearing Hihiro seeking confirmation twice, Silva nodded as he spoke.

“I am sure you are surprised, but that is the extent of my master’s power.”

“...Power? You mean that was magic just now?”

“You are completely right.”

“Hold it, isn’t that weird? From what I’ve experienced so far, you shouldn’t be able to use magic in the Red Rain right?”

That was something that Silva had told Hihiro. Hihiro even confirmed it himself by using magic. It was clear that it had been disabled at that time.

“Yes, it is clear that magic cannot be used at the current time. However, there is an exception.”

“Exception?”

“Indeed. It is this.”

Saying thus, Silva picked up something and presented it to Hihiro. Upon closer inspection, what he held was a petal of the Golden Rose .

“What’s that?”

“This flower has a special effect. As I said before, this flower contains a considerable amount of life force in contrast to its appearance.”

Hihiro heard it before when he was collecting it.

“That life force is very compatible with living beings. It will bring numerous benefits to those that consume it.”

“Benefits?”

“Yes, it is called Complete Origin .”

“What’s that?”

Hihiro heard an unfamiliar word.

“In short, the person who consumes this flower will be immune to abnormal statuses.”

“Abnormal statuses? ...I see, so that’s why she could utilize magic? No, actually, the effect of the Red Rain is an abnormal status?”

“You are absolutely right. The magic seal caused by the red rain is an abnormal status.”



“I see. For it to have such a convenient ability...”

Of course, if Hihiro used Word Magic and wrote the words Restore or Normal, he would be able to achieve the same effect. However, because magic was sealed off during the Red Rain, he was unable to use those effects.

“I see, is that why she sent an old man like you to a poisonous mountain to retrieve it?”

Hihiro was somehow able to understand the situation. In order to face this monster, preparation was necessary. That was why Liliyn sent Silva. However, Silva shook his head and said.

“Nofofo, I’m sorry but your are wrong.”

“What? I’m wrong?”

“Yes. Whether my master had this or not, a monster of this degree is not difficult for her.”

“...Then why did she use something like this, this time?”

“Even if she looks like that, she possesses a strong desire to reveal her power...to put it succinctly, she enjoys showing off her superior force.”

“Is she a kid or something?”

Hihiro let out a breath as he said it. Silva responded with a happy smile.

“Nofofo, does this not display the extent of how obsessed she is with you?”

“.....?”

Hihiro knitted his eyebrows as he craned his neck.

“There was no need for her to reveal her trump card to a worthless enemy. As she was interested in Hihiro-sama, she used her magic in an attempt to surprise you. Nofofofofofo.”

It seems that she used the Golden Rose only because she wanted to show off.

“But is it possible to defeat it without magic?”

Yes. That was the strange part. He could understand who was the stronger one level-wise. Yet, he did not think one could emerge victorious against an SS-ranked monster without the use of magic.

“Fumu, fumu. Certainly, if the opponent was a normal one, it would be impossible. That monster was the Baron Bone Lizard. A unique monster befitting of an SS rank.”

It was precisely as Hihiro had thought.

“However, no matter how strong an individual may be, they will always possess a weakness. Although the Baron Bone Lizard is no different from such monsters, it is also not an exception to this. The said weak point is a cylindric bone which acts like its core. Unlike the other bones, this one singular bone has a considerably lower defense value.”

“Is that so? Meaning that if it’s destroyed, it will be defeated?”

“Indeed. However, no normal adventurer would be capable of easily destroying it. Only those that have over 600 Attack Points are capable of destroying said bone.”

Although it might seem like obtaining 600 Attack Points would be difficult, if one was able to, they would be able to obliterate said monster in one hit.

“Basically, it’s weak in close combat?”

“Indeed. Its specialty is shooting its Bone Ball, the red orb that appeared earlier. Other than that....”

Even though Hihiro had heard a lot, it mostly consisted of ranged attacks. Rather, Hihiro was more surprised learning that the ball was made from bone as he had not expected it.

“Even so, considerable swiftness is required in order to get close. One also needs great perception to find the cylinder, and the power to attack it. Ojou-sama possesses all such qualities. Thus, from the very beginning, there was no need for her to use magic to defeat it. It has always been as such.”

“I see. By the way, I wanna ask you something.”

“If it is the matter of Ojou-sama’s magic, you realize that, should I not obtain her express permission, my mouth shall remain closed, yes?”

“I don’t give two shits about that.”

“Fo!?”

As Silva thought Hihiro would be curious about Liliyn’s magic, he was shocked upon hearing Hihiro’s response.

“What I wanted to ask about is the Golden Rose .”

“Ha, haa. Are you perchance referring to the Red Rain?”

“Yeah, how long’s it gonna stay there? Earlier, you said that it would last for three days. During this time, we can’t use magic right?”

“That is correct. The previous time, it had continued to rain for a period of three days. However, as I had stated earlier, the scale of the red clouds this time is particularly large. The Baron Bone Lizard that appeared this time is also larger than the previous one. Ah, I forgot to mention that the Baron Bone Lizard’s power is proportional to the size of the red cloud. Since the energy of the clouds is usually confined within the lake, the Baron Bone Lizard absorbs the power from the Red Rain. It is because of this that the larger the cloud is, the more powerful the Baron Bone Lizard becomes. Furthermore, this is only time that it has initiated an attack. In addition, even if we slay it, after some time, it will respawn from the lake.”

It seemed to be a monster that appeared often. Furthermore, as it was a timid creature, it waited for an opportunity when magic could not be used before beginning its hunt. It appeared that it usually fed on weak monsters that lived in the lake.

“I see. I understand the details about that monster. So? How do I get to the outside from here?”

“The...outside?”

“Yeah, I no longer have any business here, right? I’m gonna go continue my journey.”

Silva frowned upon hearing Hiiro’s words.

“I apologize. However, the Red Rain is still pouring outside. It is dangerous. As I said before, the rain is very heavy. Because Baron Bone Lizards are originally born from it, it will not cause damage to them. However, on normal bodies, it will feel like countless stones pelting upon them from the sky. It would cause tremendous damage.”

“Guh...”

Hiiro looked up the sky while groaning. It was exactly as Silva had indicated. In this kind of rain, even if one had an umbrella, one would not be able to withstand it. Also, the boat that was required to cross the lake was going to sink.

“Is that so? In other words, I can’t get out if this rain continues, huh?”

“It would appear so.”

Hiiro sighed deeply.

*(Damn. I just wanted to grab some meat, yet it turned into this disaster. Why do I always get caught up in trouble?)* However, it was a fact that Hiiro was rendered unable to use his magic at the present time. Even if he asked Silva for the Golden Rose, there would not be any in stock.

*(It can’t be helped. Even though it’s troublesome to be near that brat, I don’t have much choice but to ascertain the situation first, huh...)* Following this, he returned to his room to sleep.

# Chapter 75: The Apologizing Maid

When Hiiro woke up, it looked like it was already a bit past noon. When he went to the dining room, he saw Silva preparing lunch with great timing. It seemed he knew Hiiro had woken up, and when he asked, Silva only responded as usual, that it was because he was a butler.

It was useless to respond to him, so Hiiro let it be. When he was eating in silence, he sighed hearing the sound of rain drops which indicated that it was still raining.

Then Hiiro suddenly remembered. He wondered if Mikazuki was alright... Mikazuki should be experiencing this weird phenomena for the first time... It would be bad if she was panicking and falls into the lake.

*(Because I used Double Chain, the word I placed on Mikazuki disappeared, and I can't pinpoint her location. I think I will go check on her after finishing the meal.)* Even though he could vaguely sense the location, Hiiro tried to ask Silva where the animal feeding ground was and it seemed it was at the back of the mansion. After that, he quickly left the mansion to search for Mikazuki.

*Zazazazazaza*

Even though it was raining in the vicinity, it was strange how it didn't rain here. This really was a different world, logic couldn't be used here. While thinking that, Hiiro continued to walk.

Just like Silva said, there was something like a shed behind the mansion. There, he saw something like a chicken with plump wings. Near there, Hiiro saw Mikazuki sitting calmly while closing its eyes.

As for why it was so relaxed, it appeared there was a person grooming it.

“Kui!”

When Mikazuki realized Hiiro's presence, Mikazuki called over to Hiiro many times as if trying to get noticed by him. But, unlike Mikazuki, the other person was wearing a stiff face and looking at him.

That person was the one that he fought last night for some reason.

“I-I-I am s-sorry!”

The person who was confused and kept apologizing was none other than this mansion's maid that certainly made trouble with him last night, Shamoe.

“Kui?”

Mikazuki was confused as to why Shamoe was apologizing to her master, and was looking at each of them back and forth.

“E-E-Ehm...”

Shamoe was panicking and didn't know what to say. Watching such a scene, Hiiro only shrugged his shoulders in amazement.

"I won't just let it slide you know? Since I almost died last night."

*(That night, if I hadn't resisted, I would certainly have died. Even if I survived, I would have gotten a severe injury. I won't just let it slide just like that.)* Hearing that, she felt really bad. She was shaking while holding both her hands in front of her chest. She thought that Hiiro might be thinking of revenge.

Of course, Hiiro didn't have such intentions. Even though last night he drew his katana because of the danger, he had no intention of killing people that were not hostile.

"Can you remember?"

"Y-Y-Yes!"

"That's troublesome huh..."

If she didn't remember anything, she wouldn't feel guilty. But, it looked like she was conscious.

Since she couldn't do anything but watch, she was probably suffering since she had a weak heart.

"I-I am truly sorry! Shamoe has done such an unforgivable thing!"

She kept apologizing over and over.

It was true that she was at fault, but Hiiro could only sympathize with her. Watching a girl keep apologizing over and over made Hiiro feel bad.

"What are you doing with this drooling bird?"

"Eh ? A drooling bird ?"

"Kui kui kui kui kui!"

Mikazuki was licking its master that it had not seen for days.

"Ei, I always told you to stop that, haven't I?"

"Kuiiiiiii!"

Mikazuki shook its head as if refusing... Then, Hiiro—

"This is why."

After forcefully keeping Mikazuki away, he showed her face full of drool to Shamoe.

"I-I see..."

Understanding that, she gave something like a handkerchief from her pocket to Hiiro. Hiiro obediently took it and wiped his face.

"Then, what are you doing with this guy?"

“O-Oh, That’s right, I was brushing it.”

“Is that so? Looks like this guy has troubled you.”

Mikazuki bent its neck as if apologizing.

“N-No, it’s nothing! I can only do this much! A-And there was yesterday’s accident. I’m sorry because I couldn’t apologize right away!”

It looked like she intended to apologize last night. But since she couldn’t find him, she tried to atone for it by helping Mikazuki. She tried to apologize indirectly. If she had prepared her heart, of course she would have apologized right away, but seeing Hihiro come suddenly, her head was spinning.

Seeing this girl trembling before him, Hihiro folded his arm and said, “What are you so afraid of?”

“E-Ehm. T-That is..”

Hihiro didn’t care about racial differences. That was why he didn’t know the issues of being a half.

“That’s because, a half is a detested existence..”

“Hoh..”

What she was saying was, not only here, a Half was taboo. That was why they were despised by all races. That was why...

“Unable to use both magic and Binding huh...”

That was right, a Half received the physical characteristics from both races, but they didn’t receive the unique skills from them. Which was magic and Binding in this case. Since the blood canceled each other out, they couldn’t use them.

It was the same with a crossbreed of a Humas and Evila . Unable to use magic, Halves were considered Taboo and symbols of disaster.

Of course, crossbreeding was against the law. If the child was found, it would get banished or be eliminated.

Shamoe’s mother, an Evila , was prepared for this when she gave birth to her. Her father, a Gabranth , decided to search for a way to cross the continent and parted from his family. He told his wife and daughter that he would find it and definitely return.

But when he left, the mother and young Shamoe lived in the shed her father built. The nearby Evila noticed this, and when they found out that Shamoe was a Half, they were banished.

They had nowhere to go and her father still hadn’t returned. Because they made a promise to wait there, they didn’t want to leave that place.

Even though the Evila disagreed with this, no one touched them. But sneers and disdain were still an everyday thing. No one even bothered to look at them and treated them as it was natural to hate them.

Even though young Shamoe was fine, her mother's heart was gradually broken. When Shamoe turned 5 years old, her mother couldn't bear it any longer and collapsed. Her mother then silently died....

Shamoe was left alone and didn't know what to do. Seeing her mother pass away, the Evila used this chance to get rid of her. They burnt down the shed that her father built.

After she had nowhere to return to, she didn't know where to go. She had no choice but to wander the continent, but she couldn't use magic. This continent was not that kind to let a young girl live.

She couldn't even gather enough food. She didn't know how to find a river to drink from. She was left dying. Reaching her limit, when she accepted her fate, something was looking down at her.

“That was Ojou-sama.”

She didn't wear a frightened face any more, a small, gentle smile could be seen.

“That time, she lent her hand to me, and said ‘It's Super Cool!! Ah~ Kya Kya~’”

“Hah?”

Shamoe had sparkling eyes and approached Hiiro.

“She said to me who was lying on the ground, ‘If you want to live, come with me!’, Then, then, she employed me in this mansion! Ojou-sama didn't even hate a half! I'm really grateful to Ojou-sama!”

As if she forgot about Hiiro, she didn't realize she was approaching him. When she noticed, she quickly fell back and hung her head.

“E-Eh, I-I'm sorry! I-I-I have shown such an indecent thing! Argh, Shamoe is such an idiot! Idiot!”

While Hiiro was thinking that he had seen a scene like this before, Shamoe knocked her head over and over on the animal shed's wall. Hiiro shrugged.

“Come on, don't mind it. So, that's why you are working here huh? Aside from that, is it okay to tell me that story? I'm just a guest you know?”

Whether it was about Liliyn or her parents, they should be precious memories to her. Hiiro doubted Shamoe because she told such a story to a mere traveler. She smiled a little and shook her head.

“I-I heard from Silva that Hiiro is not a person that cares about race.”

*(That Hentai-jiji, saying unnecessary things.)*

Hiiro clenched his fist in his heart.

“Th-That's why, even though it's an ugly story, I-I want you to listen.”

“Is that so? If you're fine with me then it's alright. I have no intention to reveal it to anyone anyway. Let me praise you for having a good eye.”

“Th-Thank you so much!”

Even though Hiiro was boasting, Shamoe still thanked him.

*(Mu, if it was Ossan, he would retort back, but somehow she's too obedient that it's a bit annoying.)*  
Somehow, he missed Arnold's retorts...

“Well, whatever, Oh, that's right, I will call you Dojimeido<sup>21</sup>, hear me Dojimeido?”

Shamoe was dumbfounded.

“Dojimeido, of the full moon night.”

Hearing that, she sighed.

“Even though you can't control your own power, don't attack me next time okay?”

“E-Eh? I-I'm sorry!”

“You better search for a way to control it. Go ask the Akaloli. She should know some way since she has lived for so long.”

“A-Actually, I already asked and have been practicing it.”

“It doesn't go well, huh..”

“Y-Yes..”

Shamoe dropped her shoulders and took a glance at Mikazuki.

“Well, I guess it's fine as long as you're trying.”

“Eh?”

“At least, I like people who try their best even if they fail.”

“Eh?”

Hearing Hiiro's words, Shamoe blushed.

“Fueeeeeee!?”

Hearing the sudden scream, Hiiro frowned.

“E-Eh. I-It's just... W-What do you mean by 'like'? Fueeeeeee!”

Shamoe put both of her hands on her cheeks. Hiiro was confused at to why she was so surprised. Hiiro frowned and stared at her.

*(Wh-What should I do~~~~??? He-He likes Shamoe ? That means, that means...!)* Shamoe's eyes were rolling and something like steam was floating from her head, while her face was red like a tomato.

*(What a weird girl, everyone in this mansion is a weirdo.)*<sup>22</sup>

Unable to understand Shamoe's wild delusion, Hiiro looked up at the Forbidden Emperor Cloud and



wondered when the rain would stop.

# Chapter 76: Contract with a Demon?

Three days had passed in the manor. During that time, although Hiiro befriended Silva and Shamoe, he didn't even catch a glimpse of Liliyn. According to Silva, Liliyn usually stayed in her room, relying on Silva to bring her meals.

*(Haa, I don't really care about the Akaloli, but it looks like the rain's not showing any signs of stopping.....)*

During the past three days, there was no sign of the rain letting up. As it had rained continuously for such a long time, Hiiro thought that the river might overflow. However, Silva assured him that there was nothing to be concerned about.

The reason for this was that the monsters living in the lake were absorbing the Red Rain. Although it was raining continuously right now, there was a point in the past where there was no rain at all.

Because of that, the monsters shriveled up and died. Since the rain provided them with energy, they literally regarded it as a blessing.

However, to people, this was one of the most annoying events that could occur. As one could not step outside, even without Liliyn present, all one could do was stay muffled in their rooms as they ate and slept.

*(This is a waste of time. I originally wanted to practice my Word Magic, but I can't use magic right now...it's like I'm in a prison.)*

Hiiro was obviously dissatisfied at first. Yet, in actuality, the mansion was filled with books and literature that Silva had collected, appeasing Hiiro's boredom. Hiiro deemed the books in Silva's collection as intriguing, especially the books detailing topics related to the Demon World. Thus, he enjoyed himself as he read through them.

At first, he was handed a book recommended by Silva. However, as it was clearly one of those books that the Perverted Butler often had, Hiiro immediately smacked the pervert over the head with it.

As Hiiro was in the guest room, absorbed in his reading, he heard the sound of a door slowly opening. If the visitor was Silva or Shamoe, then they would definitely knock before hand. Thus, he understood that his visitor was the only other existence that resided in the mansion.

Shifting his gaze towards the opened door, he naturally saw a face that he had not seen in a while.

“Lend me some of your time.”<sup>23</sup>

With her blazing red hair, Liliyn swayed as she spoke in a commanding tone.

“I refuse.”

He instantly gave his rejection. However, perhaps expecting such an answer from Hiiro, Liliyn did not grow too upset as she continued.

“Kukuku, I see you haven’t changed much. Being able to face me with that kind of attitude, I mean.”

“I’m reading. Don’t bother me, Hikikomori<sup>24</sup>.”

“Fun, forget about that and come. I wanna show you something interesting.”

“...?”

Hearing the words ‘something interesting,’ Hiiro’s curiosity was piqued.

“What’s so interesting?”

“Like I said, if you follow you’ll find out.”

“.....”

The two’s eyes met. As Liliyn averted her eyes soon after, all the while emitting a fearless grin, Hiiro shut the book with a *pata*<sup>25</sup>.

“Where are we going?”

“Over here.”

Hiiro followed after Liliyn who had left the room. However, he noticed something suddenly drop to his feet as he exited the guest room. As he glanced at Liliyn’s back, he picked up the object at his feet.

*(This is...)*

Hiiro saw something resembling golden petals.

*(The Golden Rose ...huh?)*

In the fight earlier with the Baron Bone Lizard, Liliyn had consumed the Golden Rose . This piece may have fallen out of her clothing when she had passed this spot. As Hiiro thought so, for whatever reason, he concealed it in his pocket as he followed after Liliyn who was walking ahead.

They had entered a dimly lit room, a room that Liliyn would refer to as her own.

*(This room has really bad taste, huh.)*

As he saw several creepy masks and ornaments lined up along the walls, Hiiro shrugged his shoulders. In the center of the room was a large magic circle drawn on the floor, a lone bed sitting on top of it. On top of said bed, Liliyn quietly sat down and stared at Hiiro.

“I heard that your hobby is reading.”

Hiiro interpreted this as her most likely hearing this from Silva.

“Right now, I’ve been arranging time to decipher a certain book.”

“A certain book you say?”

“That’s right. Well, I give you permission to look.”

As Liliyn said so, she took a singular book out from under her pillow. The book, wrapped in a pitch-black hardcover, appeared to not have anything resembling a title written on it.

“This was a book that I obtained through several connections, but, here. Have a read.”

As she said so, Liliyn threw the book toward Hihiro. Catching it with both hands, Hihiro first began to check the front and back covers. As he had thought, there was no trace of a title written anywhere. As such, he had no clue as to what the contents of the book were.

For the time being, Hihiro decided to check the contents of the book, his eyes involuntarily widening as he opened the book. Seeing Hihiro’s expression, Liliyn’s gaze sharpened as she stared at him. Of course, Hihiro was oblivious to this.

“This is...why is such a thing in this world...?”

Hihiro unconsciously muttered in surprise. Of course, this was to be expected. This was because the contents of the book contained words that should not exist in this world.

“...Japanese.”

Indeed, it was precisely as Hihiro had said. The characters written in the book were undoubtedly the native language of Hihiro’s birth place, Japan.

“As I thought.”

Upon hearing Liliyn’s words, Hihiro looked toward her. He immediately regretted his actions.

“Boy, I had thought that you didn’t seem like someone born in the Demon World. No...you’re not even a native of Edea ...right?”

As she gave of an eerie smile, a dubious light shone within the depths of her eyes.

*(Damn...what the hell did I just say...?)*

As he wasn’t paying attention, he did not remember what he had said that was so significantly bad. However, from the current atmosphere, he could grasp that he had spoken something that caused even more problems for him.

“You can read that, right?”

Hihiro threw back the book as he made his usual poker face.

“What are you talking about? I was just so instinctively appalled by how messy those words were.”

Certainly, the black book was filled with scribbles. Reading it, one could tell that the characters were quirky. It could easily be called ‘messy writing’. However, seeing through Hihiro’s excuse, Liliyn’s smirked as her amusement was overflowing.

“Don’t bother, kozou.”

Saying so, she took out a flower from her pouch. It was a charming flower that closely resembled a tulip, yet its size was so small that it would fit neatly within her hand.

“This is called a Voice Flower . Its effect is...”

Liliyn began to pour magic into the flower. Following this—

“This is...why is such a thing in this world...? ...Japanese.”

Hihiro clenched his fist and gritted his teeth. He never thought that he would have his voice recorded. What he had heard from the flower was undoubtedly his own voice. It was most likely the words that he had just spoke. If it wasn’t, then it would be impossible for the word Japanese to appear.

*(This brat, she was aiming for this since the beginning...)*

Hihiro glared intently at Liliyn, however, she simply dismissed it as if it were a passing breeze as she continued.

“Well, there’s no need to make such a face. I don’t really care who you are. I have no intention of spreading this either. The only thing that I am interested in is purely you yourself.”

“...”

“Because you seem ignorant about the ways of this world, I somehow knew that you were not of this world, that you were of a completely different world, you know? Also, that ‘Jya-pa-nees’<sup>26</sup> word. That’s either this book’s title, or the general term used for the words written in it...am I wrong?”

Hihiro thought that she was an intelligent fellow as he clicked his tongue in his innermost thoughts. If Arnold was here, he would easily be able to deceive her. Yet, it seemed that he was up against the wrong opponent.

“Those words couldn’t be deciphered by anyone that I’ve met before. In other words, those characters do not belong to this world. There was also a hero summoning in the past. The hero was a savior belonging to another world. Furthermore, I heard that recently, a Hero Summoning took place in the Humas Continent. You...are you a hero?”

Liliyn asked as her eyes sparkled with a *kirakira*<sup>27</sup>, shining with the light of intrigue.

“I’m pretty sure I have no obligation to answer, you know?”

“Kukuku, certainly you have no obligation to. I just want to know. Then how about this. Name anything you desire. As compensation for fulfilling your wish, tell me about yourself.”

She reached her hand out towards Hihiro. An unpleasant sensation ran throughout his whole body, a sensation that seemed as if he were making a deal with the devil. Even if he thought it was his imagination, it was not entirely false. The girl in front of his eyes was certainly a little girl, no. What held the appearance of a little girl was actually a cunning individual that had lived tens of Hihiro’s life span.

However, as the situation was so one-sided, Hihiro felt uneasy. He had an idea to pierce the current silence, however, he was drawn by the words promising to fulfill his desire. He began to think of how to take maximum advantage of her proposal.

From what he had gathered from Silva and Shamoe, Hihiro understood that she was certainly not the type of person who would willingly spread information about others. Because of this, he particularly thought that her ideas were very exaggerated.

“...I got it. Then first, listen to my request.”

“Kukuku, very well.”

Hearing Hihiro’s words, her face brightened as she returned a slight nod.

“State anything you desire. Even if you were to say you desired my body, I wouldn’t mind, you know?”

Seeing Liliyn jokingly declare so, Hihiro glared at her with half-opened eyes.

“As if I would be interested in such a flat<sup>28</sup> body.”

She was cut down and disposed of in a single strike.

“F...Flat...you say...”

As if she had received a considerable amount of shock, her body trembled with a *furufuru*<sup>29</sup>.

“T-This...even though he’s just a lowly boy...I’ll pulverise your brain into mush...”

Although Liliyn’s words were drenched with murderous intent, Hihiro was unconcerned as he opened his mouth.

“I want the admission permit to the Fortuna Grand Library .”

“I won’t be satiated by just simply killing him...I’ll keep him alive as I show him hell...wait, what’d you say?”

“Like I said, I want the admission permit to the Fortuna Grand Library . Not just that, but the highest level clearance.”

“...When you say the highest level, are you saying that you want to view the literature in Basement 5 which requires certificates issued by the royal family?”

“That’s right. Prohibited books and archaic manuscripts, there seems to be lots of interesting things there, right?”

“...Hey, kozou. I don’t know whether you’re aware of this, but those that are allowed to view the literature in Basement 5 mostly comprise of only royalty. Even if they gave permits to the public, the chances of obtaining one would be extremely slim.”

“Aa, it’s precisely because of this that I’m saying I want to obtain such a permit.”

“...You. Have you ever been told before that you’re very bossy?”

“I’ll return those words straight back to you.”

Although they maintained a deadlock with their eyes for a while, the first to break it was Liliyn.

“...Haa. Why are you going that far? What’s your goal?”

“The hell’re you saying? Books are things that are meant to be read. It’s not something made to be stored away in a dark place. I’m traveling all around the world trying to read all the books I can.”

“Hou, so it’s just simple curiosity, huh?”

“Got a problem?”

“No...”

She grinned happily as she continued to speak.

“However, it’d be good if that curiosity didn’t destroy you someday.”

“I won’t die. Therefore, it’s fine.”

“Wha...pu—! Kuhahahahahahaha! As I thought, you’re definitely interesting! How about it, do you really have no intention of becoming mine!?”

“You’re so repetitive. I have no intention of becoming yours.”

“Kukuku, well, that’ll probably change in due time. People change. I’ll bring you to your knees someday with my charm.”

“That day will definitely not come.”

“Kukuku, we’ll see about that.”

Saying so, Liliyn opened the drawer of a shelf that had vials placed on top of it. Taking out something from the drawer, she threw it over to Hihiro with a *hyoi*<sup>30</sup>. Luckily, Hihiro caught it as he confirmed what it was.

It was a singular piece of card that had her name written on it. Upon closer inspection, the words Fortuna were written, with a golden mark pressed onto it.

“That’s the admission permit. Furthermore, it’s the one you requested, the one with the highest level clearance.”

“This is...huh.”

Although he made his request half-heartedly, knowing that it was a desire that was unlikely to be fulfilled, as he unceremoniously obtained the permit, he was obviously surprised. Because of this, he began to wonder even more as to the identity of the person before his eyes.

As she had indicated earlier, those that possessed the permit for Basement 5 mainly consisted of

royalty. And yet, she had one such permit in her possession. Knowing that this fact alone should be enough to startle anyone, Liliyn boasted as she puffed her chest out in pride, wearing a merry smile.

*(Even though she said to state any desire, I had no expectations as I told her. Talk about a stroke of good luck.)*

With regard to favors, Hihiro had another one in stock. If that one was unable to be granted then Hihiro would have determined that negotiations had broken down, causing him to immediately depart from this place. However, as he had been disappointed in a good way, the fact that Hihiro was puzzled was undeniably true.

This proved the extent of how difficult it was for a normal person to be able to obtain the Fortuna Grand Library's highest level permit.

The Fortuna Grand Library was a library that was located in the Demon Capital Xaos. It was a collection of literature that was unparalleled in this world. It was also known as the Fountain of Knowledge. It was said that no matter what problem you had, the answer would be sleeping within its walls.

Humas, Gabranth, Evila, Pheom. The library had achieved the gathering and collection of literature from all the continents. However, the library works on a permit system. In order to gain entry, one must obtain permission from both the library director, and the country.

The library had two upper levels and four basements. As one went lower, the books housed become more important, thus, it becomes even harder to gain access to them.

Basically, the Evila usually applied for a permit for Basement 1, a descending floor that often held books that were commonly sold elsewhere. Floors even lower than Basement 2 and Basement 3 required not just permission from the head librarian, but the country as well. In other words, there were floors that required permission from the Royal Family to access.

One of which was the floor known as Basement 5, a floor where books that were never revealed to the general populace that are stored. Hihiro definitely wanted to read such books.

However, upon hearing this story, Hihiro began worrying about how he would obtain access to such a place. Although he could use Word Magic to attempt to sneak in like a shinobi, if possible, he wanted to peacefully gain access to such a location. Thus, he took up Liliyn's offer without giving it much thought.

It was a happy miscalculation that she happened to have a permit. Furthermore, it was a permit of the highest level. He had slightly viewed her as the goddess of luck, however, he decided not to voice this out loud.

*(This brat....no, she's a hag, huh. Really, who in the world is she...)*

Quite unlike himself, Hihiro slightly felt curious about Liliyn herself. Oblivious to such thoughts of his, Liliyn began to speak.

"According to the contract, I've given you a means of entering Fortuna. That's why, next, listen to my demands."



Hiiro stared at Liliyn as he placed his hand on his chin. Silence shortly followed.

*(I better make use of what I can...huh.)*

Thinking such, Hiiro quietly opened his mouth.

“...If it’s just hearing you out then I’ll listen.”

Upon hearing Hiiro’s words, Liliyn once again showed a broad smile.

# Chapter 77: New Traveling Companions

“As I’ve already said before, the only people in this room are you and me. There’s no way for other people to overhear us. Therefore, you’re free to tell me.”

“You’ve taken some pretty meticulous preparations, huh?”

The whole purpose of beckoning Hihiro into her room was for this. Primarily because she was so interested in him. Specifically, she was interested in the rare magic known as **Word Magic** .

“First off, seeing that you can read that book, are you really not a Hero?”

“Aah, I’m not a hero.”

“.....Let me rephrase that, do you know what a Hero is?”

As she threw a curveball of a question at Hihiro, he wondered as to why she had such a profound interest in them.

“Can I ask you something first?”

“Nh? What?”

“Why are you so interested in Heroes?”

“Fu~n, a person summoned from another world is much more interesting compared to those living in a boring society.”

“...Boring? A war almost started a little while ago, you know?”

The threat of an outbreak of war was still present.

“I’m not interested in war. The history of humanity is the history of war. I’ve lived for a very long time. Do you really think I’ve maintained no contact with war?”

Analyzing what she just said, Hihiro could assume that she had lived for such a long period of time that she has probably lived through and witnessed numerous wars. There was also a chance that she had participated in them as well. Hihiro presumed that this was most likely the reason why war did not appeal to her.

*(Well, if she were one of those war-hungry people then it would be a pain.)* Hihiro was relieved that the girl before him held no interest in it. If she was, he might have gotten caught up in the war.

“You say you’re not a Hero, but you aren’t a resident of Edea, right?”

“...Haah, it doesn’t seem to be any harm in telling you...but make sure not to tell anyone else, okay?”

Hiiro wanted to confirm this for the second time.

“You know, I’ve already said it several times before. Do I look like a person who would foolishly spread information?”

Hiiro stared at her for a bit. She made a displeased expression with her mouth and eyebrows. Looking at such a face, his expectations dropped. He felt like he was talking to a child.

It was true that she had the same preferences as him. As long as her curiosity was satiated, she was satisfied. In addition, she did not seem like someone who would recklessly share what she knew.

Concerning the risks, Hiiro could feel that if he answered her barrage of questions, his secrets would not spread to the rest of the world. She, like Hiiro, was also a user of a Unique Magic. It was probable that she would be considerably capable of sympathizing with him. Although overly optimistic, Hiiro felt that after advancing this far, it wouldn’t be a bad idea to just tell her everything.

“I understand. However, I will only tell you once.”

“What? Why?”

“If you don’t like it, I’ll talk more after I confirm that this is real.”

Hiiro showed her the permit to the Fortuna Grand Library as he said so.

“Really! Do you think what I gave you is fake?”

“No, I’m not sure. I don’t know what the real thing looks like. I don’t want to be a fish lured in by fake bait.”

Right after he said it, he took out from his pocket a golden petal; a golden petal that he picked up on his way into the room. When Liliyn saw it, her eyes opened wide.

“I’ve had enough of it...of your deceit.”

She gritted her teeth and scowled at the smirking Hiiro. Her expression changed to a grin soon after.

“Kukuku, you’re an interesting brat. I’ll tell you what, I’ll pretend that I didn’t hear anything.”

“Hm? Are you okay with that?”

Hiiro scowled involuntarily at the surprising response.

“Yes, it would much more interesting to observe and find out everything about you.”

“...Isn’t that bad character?”

“Kukuku, what’re you talking about? Did you think I was a good person?”

“I couldn’t care less whether you’re a good person or a bad one.”

“Kuhaha, well said. You are becoming more and more interesting. Alright then. Let’s declare it here.”

“.....?”

Liliyn intently pointed her finger at Hiiro.

“I’ll definitely make you mine. Just you wait.”

She said with an insatiable curiosity, her pupils were shining like a child who had just found a new toy. Seeing such an expression, Hiiro made the blunder of finding it interesting as well.

Hiiro smiled and replied.

“If you think you can, then prove it to me.”

He stated it as if a game was about start. He began to feel a sense of comfort. It was different than the comfort he felt with Arnold and Muir. In all honesty, Hiiro needed to be alert when interacting with Liliyn, yet, he involuntarily found it interesting.

*(Also, if I acquaint myself with someone like her, she could become a source of strength or power in the future.)* Although it was the same during his interactions with Rarashik, as he was mostly dancing around atop of Liliyn’s palm, Hiiro’s anxiety couldn’t help but build up. It was mainly because she was a strong individual that he couldn’t afford to lower his guard around, Hiiro was betting on using her as a source of growth for him to get even stronger.

“Well then, I’ll return this to you.”

Hiiro tossed the permit back at Liiliyn who caught it expertly as he proceeded to leave the room.

Liliyn took the permit and played with it for a bit before smiling. Following this, she returned the permit to its original location. However, something strange occurred as she did so.

Earlier, when Hiiro had looked at the permit, it was clear that the permit had the highest clearance level, the Basement 5 gold mark printed on it. However, the permit for some reason, returned to a silver color.

She looked at the petals that Hiiro had dropped on the ground as she exhaled.

*(Kukuku, it’s going to get busy now.)*

A pair of crimson red eyes glowed suspiciously in the dim room.

The day after she talked with Hiiro, she gathered everyone in the room first thing in the morning as she made her declaration.

“Lets go on a journey.”

Hiiro was unsurprised with the announcement since he expected it after last night. However, the same could not be said for the other two. Silva stared at them with a stunned expression as Shamoe cried out.

“Fu~e~e~e~e~e?”

She was completely startled.

“What are you so surprised about?”

“I-I-I-I’m very surprised. W-W-Why are we suddenly going on a journey?”

It was a natural question for Shamoe. But Liliyn had a neutral expression as she moved her mouth.

“Un, the reason is, I’ll be joining that person on his journey.”

“H-Hihiro-sama’s....”

“Un!”

Suddenly Silva opened his eyes wide and—

“*Mumumu!*”

—bellowed thus.

“Master, there is no way! You already have me, yet you have fallen for Hihiro-sama? P-Please say it is not so! If you are ever lonely, you will always have a man with an overflowingly passionate soul and throbbing heart to embrace you.”

“As if—!”

“*Bu-gyo-wa?*”

Irritated by Silva’s complete misunderstanding, she drop-kicked him on the head, making him crumple onto the ground.

“S-Silva-sama.”

Shamoe grew flustered as she tried to deal with the current spectacle. Liliyn folded her arms, exhaling as she spoke.

“Listen up, I made a deal with that person. The contents of that deal, however, are a secret.”

The contents weren’t that important, however, she was told not to talk about it so she planned on doing just that.

“Because of the deal, I have no choice but to follow that person to his destination.”

“W-Where is that place?”

Shamoe asked anxiously.

“Demon Continent, Xaos.”

Upon hearing that name, Silva stood up vigorously as he looked at Liliyn with glistening eyes.

“N-No, you mustn’t go there!”

“W-What is it all of a sudden?”

Liliyn was also caught by surprise when the invincible butler suddenly resurrected.

“Don’t go. Don’t go. Please don’t go! Please don’t go to that place... Xaos .”

The other three looked at the heated old man.

“That place is a city! You are aware, yes? It is a place with lots of people! In such a place, what do you think would happen to a lazy, sheltered, cute and beautiful princess?”

Although there seemed to be some hidden intentions there, they all remained silent for the time being and listened.

“If you were to wander into such a big place, there is a chance that you would get lost. Using that opportunity, a low-life would approach you and then take you to some isolated ally and...and bufufofo!”

To everyone’s surprise, a red substance began to flow out of Silva’s nose for some reason.

“Ku..no...nofofo...this isn’t good.”

“What isn’t good is this pervert!”

“A-cho-bu-rin!?”

The answer was quite clear. It would be better to leave this perverted old man behind.

With a wonderful uppercut by Liliyn, the perverted old man’s head buried itself into the ceiling.

*(This place is definitely chaotic.)*

The butler in particular.....

*(There was no way someone who’s at Level 148 would be taken out so easily by a guy.)* She would definitely turn the tables on that person.

Liliyn dusted off her hands *Pan-Pan* and continued.

“The Red Rain has weakened. It is likely that it will cease tonight. We should be able to depart so make your preparations. Also, that person is abnormal. Shamoe, please crush his bones and grind it into bird feed.”

“Eh, Ah, Yes! ...Ah, no, I mean...”

The maid was unsure as to what she should do. The butler had his head buried in the ceiling. The little girl who only moved straight toward her goals.

*(Going on a journey with these people.....it’s depressing.)* When he went to Liliyn’s room, no matter whether the permit was real or fake, this would still be the result. Even if it was fake, he would have to no choice but to take the permit to the Demon Continent Xaos to complete the deal.

Also, even if it was real, he would not be able to use the permit without her presence. He could do something with Word Magic , like copy the permit. However, it would be suspicious for a normal person to have such a permit in the first place.

He could disguise himself as Liliyn and use the permit. However, if the permit was fake, he wouldn't be able to do anything. He thought of lots of other things on his mind, but he would only use force if all else failed.

As she was so interested in him, Hihiro determined that she could either restrain him or accompany him on his journey. The possibility of either was quite high. Hihiro had made preparations as he heard Silva say that Liliyn excelled in brute force.

From the deal last night, he understood why she wanted to go on a journey with him. Also, if she went with him, it was clear that the other two would follow as well. That was because, for some reason, both Shamoe and Silva relied on her.

Three more people would become troublesome. Hihiro liked journeying alone. However, since coming to this world, he thought that traveling with others was not bad at all.

Arnold, Muir and now Mikazuki. Although it was certainly good to travel alone, it was definitely more interesting to travel with another person.

There were a lot of things that Hihiro didn't know about the Demon continent. Liliyn and the other two would probably know a lot about the continent. Learning about them during the journey would become a major asset later on.

*(If something happens, I can always use the word Transfer to escape right away.)* Word Magic had a wide range of applications.

# Chapter 78: The Servant's Worries

That night, while Hihiro was sleeping, there was a knock on the door. And when he answered it turned out to be Silva.

“Can we speak for a moment?”

“Sure, just make it quick.”

“Yes!”

Hihiro sat on the sofa, while Silva served some tea.

“Well, what do you want?”

“I deeply apologize.”

Silva suddenly bowed his head. Hihiro didn't understand and tilted his head to the side.

“What do you mean?”

“It's about Ojou-sama.”

“I thought you got forced.”

“Ah, that uh..”

It looked like she threatened Hihiro to join her on his journey.

“Ojou-sama is a person like that, once she finds something interesting, she will take it no matter what.”

“That's true. I understand that.”

“But, if it's really troublesome, you should go now when Ojou-sama is sleeping.”

“Oi...”

Hearing Hihiro interrupting him, Silva had a blank face.

“Wh-What's the matter?”

“Even though I have no intention to go with that litt...no, Akaloli. It's not that I got forced against my will you know? Well, though it's true that she insisted a bit.”

“Is-Is that so?”

“Yeah, we already agreed. That's why Jii-san doesn't have to worry, or, shouldn't you have some confidence?”



“Nofofofo, I am confident, but it’s just that Ojou-sama can’t see other people’s circumstances and normally forces something on them against their will.”

“True.”

“It’s also due to the fact that Ojou-sama lives in such a remote place.”

“Eh... Is that so?”

Basically, this mansion was used so that she didn’t bring trouble to others..

“I don’t think that’s admirable though.”

“Nofofofofo, even though Ojou-sama looks like that, she is also kind you know?”

Seeing Silva smiling like this, rather than a servant, he seemed more like a father.

“Since she has lived for such a long time, she has had to go through sweet and bitter times, and has a lot of experience because of it.”

It was true that being Level 148 surely meant she could not be half-assed in terms of experience. Just like he said, she should have lots of experience.

From the standpoint of life experiences, Hihiro couldn’t even compare.

“Aside from that, there is another reason why this mansion is built here, a BIG REASON.”

“Oh...?”

“Like I have mentioned before, this place is full of weird and eccentric people. This building is also built for those who have lost their homes.”

“Like her huh...”

“That’s right.”

*(It’s true that Silva mentioned something about this being a place with weird and eccentric people. But I didn’t think it was built for that purpose.)* “Actually, I’m a Spirit .”

“...”

“I’m sorry that I kept silent about this before, but now that we are going to be traveling together, this is a courtesy.”

“Is that so...”

Though Hihiro had already known this beforehand, since he used Pry on him, he nodded out of respect for his feelings.

“And, as you already know, Shamoe is a Majuu . It’s hard to live in this land.”

“I see. So that is why she built this building.”

Hihiro said that while looking around the room. Silva nodded.

“Even so, there have been no guests for a long time. Though, monsters still come.”

Silva said that with a lonely face

“Well, though I think the problem is the location.”

Well, it was the truth that this place is surrounded by lake. A better place surely existed.

“Nofofofo, that’s right. But, Ojou-sama took a liking to this place.”

“Why?”

“Because the abnormal is more interesting to her.”

“Is she an idiot or something?”

*(I really wonder if she lost her mind or something else entirely.)* “Nofofofo, an ordinary person like me can’t understand Ojou-sama’s interests.”

“No no no, it’s simply because she is simply too weird.”

Seeing Hihiro say that while simply sighing, Silva smiled and said, “Nofofofo, she likes your straightforward approach you know?”

“I don’t care.”

“Nofofofofo. Since she always sticks with her decision, she got stuck here. Though, as expected, no one came.”

“True.”

“Ojou-sama is helplessly bored. She always told me to go travel on impossible quests for fun.”

“Ahh, so that mountain huh..”

*(Now that I think of it, it was obvious that Silva was moving by Liliyn’s order.)* “It’s not only that though. But Ojou-sama eventually got bored with that too.”

“...”

“That time, when Hihiro-sama came.”

“What a coincidence.”

“Nope, more than a coincidence, from the start, I already intended to invite you.”

Hearing that, Hihiro narrowed his eyes.

“Oh really now?”

“Yes, I immediately could tell that Hihiro-sama was not normal.”

“I see... a Spirit’s skill huh. Are you from the observing race?”

“Nofofofo, as expected, you truly knew. I presume, you have met another Pheom?”

“That is the question.”

“Nofofofo, that’s a shame. But even in the realm of Spirits, I’m not normal.”

“Hm?”

“Normally, Pheom do not have the power to observe.”

“I guess that’s true. If it was true, you would have known immediately that I was not from the Imp Race and saw through my identity.”

*(The Spirit I met before saw through my beast appearance. If Silva were to possess that power, it would be the same. But since he didn’t, I suppose he didn’t have it.)* “Due to many circumstances, the eccentric me ended up here.”

“A pervert right?”

“Nofofofo, that’s harsh you know. Nofofofo.”

“Well, after I got here, I’m wondering if there’s something.”

“Is that so? But Hihiro-sama himself is the one that made the bored Ojou-sama that has been holed up here become cheerful again.”

“Oi, I didn’t do anything though?”

“No no, even Shamoe has the same thought. She, who was a despised existence by the Evila, can talk with you. She would have approved of it too.”

“You sure praise me a lot.”

Hearing Silva say that so seriously, it made it somewhat awkward. While Hihiro averted his eyes, trying not to make any more misunderstandings, he drank the tea.

“It’s nothing. It seems I have taken a lot of time. I’m sorry.”

“That’s true, but is that person alright there?”

A voice crying “Fueee” could be heard. Silva opened his eyes wide for a second and smiled.

“Oh...um, I’m busted?”

“Obviously.”

“That’s because...”

GAZAGAZAGAZAFURUFURUFURU<sup>31</sup>

The room's door was unnaturally shaking.

“There's no way to ignore it.”

“Nofofofo, Shamoe, you can come in you know?”

Hearing that, Shamoe opened the door and peeked inside. *Giii*.

She just passed by chance and overheard Silva's voice. She tried to eavesdrop, but it seemed she got busted a while ago.

When she heard the conversation, she touched the door and it began to shake. She tried to hold it, and it seemed it gave her away. Though the last part was why she got busted.

“A-Ah, Th-That was... Eh-Eh, sorry for eavesdropping!”

She bowed her head vigorously. It was not like Hihiro minded the eavesdropping, and he didn't blame anyone.

“Don't mind it. That aside, are you alright?”

“Fuuee?”

“We're going to Evila Capital. There will be a lot of them.”

She already experienced her home being destroyed by the Evila. Though it was unlikely she would meet the same people, there were many of them. They might be from the same race that banished her.

Hihiro thought that having that kind of experience would be traumatic when she met other Evila.

But while he was thinking that, she was wearing a smile.

“Th-Thank you very much! But Shamoe's home is beside Silva-sama and Ojou-sama. If they want to go, so I must go too!”

“Nofofofo, it means she's also prepared.”

“It seems so.”

*(It seems it's decided, that we will all go together.)* “Hihiro-sama, this might be sudden, but as comrade, please take care of me!”

“Wait. What do you mean by comrade!?”

“Mumumu, of course as our beloved Ojou-sama's fanclub!”

“.....”

“As a comrade!”

....

“As a com—”

“Stop it!”

*“Boronbi!?”*

Silva was given a short flight courtesy of a kick from Hiiro.

“Geez, it seems I really need to leave that Jiji.”

“Fueeeeee~”

Shamoe was flustered as usual, and Silva also revived quickly as usual and now was saying, “Nofofoyo, looks like it’s gonna be fun now! Nofofofoyo!”

“Haa... I thought I died.”

“A-Ah, Hiiro-sama!”

“Hm?”

“Sh-Shamoe also!”

“Ahh...”

“I-I will bring new batch of tea, okay?”

Looking at her greeting desperately, he already thought to leave her from the start. Suddenly— “Fueeee!?”

*Gashan~!*

*“Bunii!”*

She stumbled forward and magnificently dropped the pot on the bed.

“Awawawawawa, I-I’m sorry ! Sh-Shamoe is idiot, idiot, idiot, idiot!”

While she was hitting her own head, her breasts shook and Silva was looking at them dangerously.

*(I should think of a plan to get out of here tonight...)* While he was thinking of this chaotic situation being an everyday occurrence, Hiiro felt like a heavy burden was placed on him.

# Chapter 79: And Now, Towards the Journey

“Now, let’s get a move on you lot!”

The following day, Liliyn frolicked as if she were an extremely energetic good girl. She pointed towards the other side of the lake as her back faced the mansion.

As she had indicated, the rain seemed to have stopped during the middle of the night. At the present time, the figure of the Forbidden Emperor Cloud that loomed over them in the sky was nowhere to be seen. If one were to compare this day to the previous one, the current skies were cloudless, as if the storm had been a lie.

Not only had the weather turned fine after such a long time, but they were also going to be embarking on a journey. In light of this, Liliyn’s mood became ecstatic. Although this was not the first time she had gone on a journey, she did not have a reason to travel until now. In other words, there was nothing that had piqued her interest significantly enough to motivate her to go out on an excursion.

However, at the present time, there was the presence of who Liliyn had declared as an ‘Unusual Visitor’, Hihiro. Hihiro, in and of himself, was the exact definition of the unknown. At first, she was determined to learn about Hihiro by any means, even if she had to resort to brute force. However, in light of their exchange the other day, she began to think that drawing out the answers all at once and then having him leave would be such a shame.

As she had never formed such thoughts before, she was bewildered, yet she also felt comfortable for some reason. It was precisely because of this that, in order for her to continue enjoying this sensation longer, she wanted to discern the answers for herself by observing Hihiro with her own eyes and ears on this journey.

“It’s fine if you want to go, but what’re you gonna do about the mansion? Well, no matter what you want to do, I guess you can only just leave it be, huh.”

However, Liliyn’s following sentence caused Hihiro to express shock, his eyes widening as far as they could go.

“What are you saying? Isn’t it obvious that we’re bringing it along with us.”

“.....Ha?”

While Hihiro wondered what the hell this girl was saying, he began to doubt his own ears as he assumed that what he had heard was mistaken. Thus, he began to ask for confirmation.

“O-Oi, what did you just say? You’re going to...bring the mansion with you?”

“Aa, it’s my possession. I have no intention of letting anyone do anything to it.”

It seemed that his ears were not playing tricks on him. Nevertheless, this time he began to question her sanity. A mansion was not food, nor was it a commodity. Even if one said that they wanted to bring it along, this task would immediately be deemed impossible.

“Look, if you express such an extreme level of selfishness, I can only see you as a simpleton.”

“Fun, if you don’t know anything then shut your mouth, kozou. Do it, Silva.”

“As you command.”

As he said so, Silva stood in front of the mansion before kneeling and placing both hands onto the ground.

“What’re you trying to do?”

“Well, just watch. You’ll get to see something quite interesting.”

Liliyn conducted herself in a suggestive manner as she smirked. Following her proposal, Hihiro began to watch over Silva’s actions.

“Now I shall begin. Dark Gate!”

As he cast the spell, a black substance began to spread out through the ground underneath both of his hands. Upon a singular glance, it was easy to identify the black substance as a shadow.

Zuzuzuzuzuzuzuzuzuzuzuzuzuzuu<sup>32</sup>.....!

As the shadow began to grow bigger and bigger, it began to encompass the bottom of the mansion. In the following instance, the mansion began to shake with a *gura*<sup>33</sup>.

*(Oi, oi. Seriously...?)*

As the mansion seemed to tilt slightly, it began to quickly sink. Yes, the mansion began to become swallowed by the shadows. In the blink of an eye, the mansion became buried in the vastly spread shadow, giving birth to a vacant lot.

“Umu. As usual, he’s such a useful fellow.”

As Liliyn folded her arms, she nodded contentedly.

*(I see. According to my memory, Silva was a Spirit of Darkness, wasn’t he. I guess that means that what just occurred was the result of his magic. Even so, saying that they’re going to bring it along. I guess they can store whatever they want with them, huh.)*

It was most likely that they could take it out as well.

*(It’s certainly convenient. But I was shown some really good magic, huh.)*

When using Word Magic, imagination was essential. As he was shown Silva’s magic with his own eyes, it had now become easier for Hihiro to produce the same effect with a corresponding word.

*(A ‘storage’ word, huh.....I’ll have to try it out later.)*

In the meantime, Silva, who had just finished his duty, began to converse with Shamoe who had just returned.

“Unfortunately, Shamoe, the garden would be quite...”<sup>34</sup>

Certainly, the flowers and crops that were being grown in the garden required care. If left alone, it would be reasonable to expect that, someday, they would wither and become useless. Although Silva’s ability was indeed useful, it appeared to lack any refrigeration or heat insulation functions.

“T-That’s alright.”<sup>35</sup> I have already said my farewells to those children.”

She seemed to have already given her partings to the flowers that she cherished and tenderly cared for.

“Is that so? In which case, I am relieved.”

“Yes!”

“Oi, you two! If you’re done then hurry it up! Silva, begin preparations for crossing the lake!”

“As you command.”

As Silva responded so, he approached the lake, his shadow once again spreading over the lake. However, instead of storing an item away, something emerged from the shadows. It was a singular vessel, a boat. The boat that had carried Hiroyuki previously had become ragged and worn out, thanks to the Red Rain, rendering it useless.

“Now, let’s set off!”

Liliya, who seemed to be in a good mood, boarded the boat as she was being escorted by Silva. Even though Mikazuki was there, as the boat was quite large, they had just managed to fit everyone onto the boat.

As Silva confirmed that everyone had gotten on the boat, he began moving the oar in order to make it move forward. Upon inspection, the oar seemed quite heavy and difficult to handle. However, seeing Silva’s unchanging, nonchalant complexion, Hiroyuki came to the conclusion that Silva was indeed a level 80 Spirit .

Inherently, the Pheonians were a race that preferred harmony and tended to avoid conflict. As they were the race that possessed the most affinity with magic, their physical force, that was to say their brute strength tended to be quite poor, even when compared to other races.

However, as he had a level of 80, he should have obtained decent stats corresponding to such a level. In addition, to be able to propel the boat forward with an oar in such heavy red water, all the while maintaining a collected composure indicated that such a difficult task was simple to him.

As they had directly crossed the lake without incident, the four people and one animal placed their feet on solid ground.

“Well then, Kozou. The destination is the Demon Capital Xaos , however, have you decided on what route you’re going to take?”



Liliyn asked so.

“No, I don’t really have a particular route in mind. I just wanted to go explore around the Demon World. Also, it’s not like that’s the final destination. I was just thinking of stopping by should I encounter it by chance.”

“What, you have no plan huh? Boring.”

“To begin with, this is just a carefree journey. Things like a plan don’t exist.”

In response to her manner of speaking, Hihiro grew slightly irritated. As Hihiro seemed to have slightly taken offense to her comment, he wanted to respond with an excuse. However, upon seeing her contrasting joy at his panic, he decided to keep his mouth shut.

“Fumu....in other words, you’re in no hurry...as there are a few places that I want to go, should we just go there?”

Hihiro wasn’t particularly going to object. As the Demon World was one which was unknown to him, he would make full use of their knowledge of said world. For Hihiro who wanted to look around the entire Demon World at least once, he was certainly appreciative of the guide supplied to him.

However, once he grew curious and asked as to where she wanted to go, Liliyn simply grinned and laughed as she answered.

“The Imp Race’s Village.”

“.....”

*‘This brat. How long is she gonna fuck<sup>36</sup> around with me.’* Hihiro began to grow frustrated as he thought so. Although Hihiro was currently in his Imp form, he was originally human. Not to mention, the one who had revealed Hihiro was not an Imp the other day was none other than Liliyn.

If Hihiro were to visit a place where the real ones lived, the probability that various problems would arise were exceptionally high. After all, Hihiro was so ignorant of them that he was unaware of the Imp Race’s weakness. If they were to investigate him, it would become quite troublesome.

Whether she had known this or not. No, as she had clearly known this and voiced such a proposal, Hihiro glared at her. However, upon seeing Hihiro’s scowl, Liliyn happily accepted it as she let out a large grin.

“Kukuku, I’m joking, I’m joking. It was a small joke of an adorable young maiden.”

“Where is this young maiden, huh?”

Although Hihiro suppressed his habit of calling her a baba<sup>37</sup>, Liliyn understood what it was that Hihiro tried to convey.

“Ah? What’d you say, boy?”

*Piki<sup>38</sup>*. A blue vein appeared on her forehead.

“Well, well you two! How about I make a proposal?”

““Nn?””

The two began to stare at Silva.

“First, shall we proceed while aiming to visit settlements near this area. Following this, we shall continue on the the next closest village. Should we continue on as such, we will naturally arrive at   Xaos   .”

As Hihiro and Liliyn were glaring at each other, they both let out a *fu* as they shrugged.

“That’s fine. Let’s get moving.”

“Kora<sup>39</sup>! Don’t go ordering me around, kozou! Your master is me, you know.”

“Stop screwing around, Akaloli. Who’s my master?”

“Isn’t it obviously me?”

“What kind of arrogant things are you saying with such a puny body?”

“Eei! Don’t call me puny!”

“Feeeeee~!”

“Nofofofofo!”

“Kui kui kui!”

Looking at the two who were arguing in an uproar were Shamoe, who constantly fretted ‘Awa Awa’, and Silva, who continued to laugh joyously. In addition, Mikazuki, thinking that she was able to continue their journey, was overcome with enthusiasm.

Hihiro, after gaining some new companions, once again began his journey with the aim of ending up in the Demon Capital   Xaos   . However, Hihiro was not yet aware. In the oncoming tragedy that would soon strike that city, Hihiro would become the greatest determining factor in its conclusion. Hihiro was not yet aware.

# Chapter 80: The Heroes One Month Later

In the Royal Capital Victorias, the festival celebrating the birth of King Rudolf van Strauss Arclaim and his daughter, Lilith, had begun. Coincidentally, the two had been born on the same day of the same month.

Although it was a festival, it wasn't a large event that took place across the entire nation. Even though it was referred to as the festival of birth, the reality was akin to a birthday party that took place within the confines of the castle. However, those taking part in the celebrations were very important people.

Of course, for royalty it was a given. The guest list extended to famous writers and musicians, painters and chefs, and even famous adventurers. The line-up was so overwhelming, one could only describe it as amazing. Everyone in attendance was someone whose name was well known throughout the country.

“Congrats, Lilith!”

The one who had called out to Lilith who was visibly exhausted from greeting celebrities was one of the heroes summoned from another world. One of the ones that held the fate of the world on their shoulders, Taishi Aoyama.

“Ah, Taishi-sama!”

Lilith joyfully rushed over toward Taishi while making a blossoming smile, as if her fatigue had been blown away. Although she normally didn't wear makeup, as this was a fairly important occasion, not to mention that she was the subject of the celebration, she had firmly applied it.

Lilith's makeup was very natural and looked very good on her. Taishi thought she was always cute, but she was even more so today, and he had his breath taken away.

*(Uu... Cute!)*

Seeing Lilith's beaming smile as she ran towards him like a puppy, Taishi had a strong desire to embrace her. However, he couldn't do that. He could tell that if he did, the girl next to him would hound him.

*Dosu<sup>40</sup>*

“Gufu<sup>41</sup>!”

He suddenly felt an impact in his side. When he looked, he could see the girl's elbow buried in his side.

“W-What was that for, Chika...”

That's right. That girl, like him, was also a hero that was summoned, Suzumiya Chika. She had brown, healthy-looking skin and a nice, slender body. Also, the dress that she was currently wearing had a slit in it that resembled a China dress. It suited her very well.

However, that girl was currently wearing a sour look while wedging her elbow into Taishi.

“No reason~. It’s just that you were looking at Lilith with a perverted look on your face so I thought I’d just caution you.”

“What do you mean ‘caution’? This is just violence. In the first place, I wasn’t looking at her with perverted...”

“You weren’t looking at her? Nnnn?”

“T-That’s...”

Looking at Lilith’s pink dress, which slightly exposed her breasts, Taishi’s face turned red, answering while averting his gaze. Noticing where he was looking, Chika stabbed his eyes with her fingers.

“Gyaa<sup>42</sup>!?”

“T-Taishi-sama!?”

“F-Fun! He got what he deserves!”

Lilith nervously tried to support Taishi who was causing a commotion while holding his eyes.

There were two people who were looking at those three from a different place. Those two girls were also heroes that were summoned. The one wearing a yellow dress, which did nothing to hide her voluptuous breasts, was Minamoto Shuri. The other, wearing a deep blue dress while holding a plate full of food, was Akamori Shinobu.

“Nyahaha, Taishi-chi<sup>43</sup> has it rough~”

She spoke while bringing food to her mouth as if she were a completely unrelated third party.

“Uun<sup>44</sup>, but Taishi-kun is also at fault.”

“You think so~? Well, I bet trying to capture Taishi-chi would be really troublesome”

“T-That’s true.”

“Nn... Are you fine not going over there too, Shuri-chi?”

“Eh? M-Me? N-No, I’m...”

Shuri looked toward the other three as she spoke. It seemed like Taishi was still surrounded by the two while being told something.

“I-I don’t have the courage to join in...”

“Nyahaha, I’ll bet. You’d need some serious power to jump in there.”

Shinobu understood that it’d be impossible for the quiet Shuri to join in on that chaotic spectacle. Shuri, of course, also had feelings towards Taishi. However, she couldn’t act as forward as Chika or Lilith. Rather than that, if she were asked if she wanted Taishi so much that she would fight with her friends, she

wasn't sure how she would answer.

As if understanding what that girl was thinking, Shinobu smiled broadly and gave a light laugh.

“Maaaaan, it really is fun, people in love.”

“Eh? Did you say something?”

“Nope! It's nothing!”

Then, seemingly having finished their conversation, the three walked toward Shuri and Shinobu. Taishi had a dull and tired expression.

“Good work, Taishi-chi!”

“If you were watching, then help me out a bit...”

“No way! It was so interesting, why do I have to put a stop to it!?”

“Look here, you...”

As she saw Taishi's shoulders drooping limply, Shinobu laughed. As she did, someone suddenly knocked into Taishi.

“Owa<sup>45</sup>!?”

Taishi, who was about to tumble forward, desperately endured it. However, as the one who knocked into him seemed to have dropped something, they had fallen onto their knees as they stared at the ground.

“E-Excuse me-su<sup>46</sup>! This was completely caused by my carelessness-su!”

Even while they said this, they continued to conduct their search.

“Eh? Ah, no, I'm alright, but...did something happen?”

Taishi said so while looking down at the person who was desperately searching for something. Said individual seemed to be a male as he wore a tuxedo.

“Is something the matter?”<sup>47</sup>

Shinobu also raised the question.

“Eh, eeh. It seems that I've apparently dropped my glasses-su. I can't see a thing-su.”

As they thought this was bad, those around the area began to join in the search.

“Ah, aren't these it?”

As Chika had found them, she handed them over to the person. Said individual then began to politely bow several times.

“I must offer you my most sincere and gracious appreciation-su. Even though I was the one who had

bumped into you, I am most thankful-su.”

“No, no. We must help each other in times of need.”

As Taishi said so, he began to observe the individual. Blue hair that had been worn behind the head had extended to his waist. As his bangs were considerably long, it completely covered his eyes, to the point where they could not be seen. Although he had worn very large, round glasses, this would lead some to wonder whether or not they could actually see. His age was not significantly different from the group of Heroes.

“Iya<sup>48</sup>~, you’ve really helped me out-su. Are you alright-su?”

The young man bashfully scratched his head. As he had once again lowered his head, the youth inquired into Taishi’s well being. He had asked whether any injuries were sustained due to his collision.

“No, no, I’m fine.”

“Is that so-su. That’s a relief-su.”

“Ano<sup>49</sup>...”

What had been inserted between the two’s exchange was Lilith’s voice.

“Nn? What’s wrong, Lilith?”

“N-No, ano...are you, perhaps, Nazaar-san?”

Upon hearing Lilith’s words, Chika pricked up her eyebrows.

“...Someone you know?”

As she heard Taishi ask, Lilith faintly pulled her chin.

“Ah, no. I only know about this person because I’ve heard of him, so...”

“A celebrity?”

As Shinobu asked, Lilith once again slightly nodded.

“Yes. Isn’t that the case, Nazaar-san?”

Following this, the young man that had remained silent until now suddenly smiled.

“Iya~, as I don’t often attend places like this, I didn’t think anyone would recognize this face-su.”

He scratched his head as he said so.

“Yeah-su. I’m Nazaar-su. Nazaar Skride. Nice to meet ya-su.”

As he said this, Nazaar extended his hand out, offering a handshake. Lilith answered by grasping his hand with both of hers.

“It’s such an honor to be able to meet you.”

“H-Hey, Lilith. Would you mind introducing us?”

“Ah, p-please excuse me! Eto<sup>50</sup>, this person is Nazaar Skride-san. He is considered one of the most famous artists.”

“No, no. You say famous, but...I don’t think it’s to that extent!”

As Taishi saw him proudly insist as such, he thought that he was a person that was somehow able to display a sense of intimacy.

“Were you perhaps invited by my father for my sake?”

“Yeah-su. Well, I’ve received an invite before, but I wasn’t able to come cause I was busy-su. ”

“Is that so.”

“Ah, I forgot-su! Congratulations-su!”

As he said so, he lowered his head. Upon seeing this, Lilith made a joyful smile as she grabbed the hem of her skirt and curtsied.

“Thank you for taking the time to congratulate me. Please fully enjoy yourself tonight.”

As her demeanor changed to a princess, she politely produced a string of words.

“Although I’d really like to, I’ve got some work left that I have to get finished-su.”

“Will you be leaving so already?”

“Unfortunately-su.”

“I see...no, I am truly grateful that you were able to visit. I believe the path back home has grown dark. Please take care.”

“Haha, I’m grateful-su. Then—”

Saying so, Nazaar departed with a swift pace.

“Is he really a celebrity, that guy?”

“Yes, Taishi-sama. All of his works are wonderfully exquisite. Look, that is one of his paintings.”

Saying so, Lilith pointed toward a decoration of the party venue. It was a painting that contained a large picture.

It depicted a goddess being surrounded by fluttering angels. Animals and humans were etched into the background. Everyone seemed to be joyously dancing.

“It’s a painting referred to as Eden<sup>51</sup>. As my father took a liking to it at a glance, he apparently obtained it from an acquaintance who didn’t want it anymore.”

“Hee<sup>52</sup>~, this painting certainly has a feeling of warmth, huh. As everyone looks so happy, viewing it kinda makes you feel the same.”

“Indeed. In addition, he is a multi-talented individual. He also writes picture books.”

“Really?”

“When I was a child, I often read the picture book The Star’s Gift<sup>53</sup>. To this day, I still keep it safely stored.”

“What’s it about?”

Perhaps as her interest had been piqued, Shinobu inquired.

“It’s an absolutely wonderful story.”

Following this, they heard the story from Lilith.

In the night sky contained many stars. The stars were always looking over various worlds. Among them, a singular star was overlooking a particular world. In that world, an abundance of people were living there.

However, the world was absent of green, being mostly covered with wild deserts. As food did not grow well in such an environment, everyone had always carried out their lives in hunger. As the star felt pity for this planet, one day, it landed onto the world in the appearance of a person.

Following this, for the sake of the people suffering from starvation, it planted the something known as the Star Seed<sup>54</sup>. Then, although the reason for this was unknown, the ground around the planted seed began to grow a variety of crops and vegetation.

In the blink of an eye, the desert transformed into a blanket of lush greenery. That world’s inhabitants that saw this were incredibly grateful to the star. As they would now be able to eat until their stomachs were full, everyone had an enveloping smile.

However, the thing known as the Star Seed was also the star’s life. In exchange for such abundant life, the star decided to give up its life.

The people’s gratitude brought them to create a statue of the star. Following this, the world swore to ensure that their world prospered, thus, everyone made a wonderful world where everyone joined their hands together.

“That star was such a good child~. No, I’m not really sure whether it was a kid though.”

Although she had tsukkomi’ed<sup>55</sup> herself, she seemed to be genuinely impressed by the story itself. She felt a feeling of warmth spreading throughout her chest.

“Yes. I also love this story so much, that even to this day I sometimes go back and re-read it.”

“That book was from that Nazaar, huh.”

Taishi spoke in admiration.



“Well, if we’re talking about Taishi, then even a handstand is impossible for him.”

“Ever since earlier, what’s gotten into you, Chika?”

“B-But you’re...that...even though I tried so hard with this dress...”

“Hah? What’d you say?”

“Nothing at all! This insensitive Taishi!”

“Ita<sup>56</sup>—!”

As his foot was stomped on, Taishi raised a groan of pain.

“W-What the hell, Chika!?”

“I don’t care anymore!?”

“I have no idea what that’s supposed to mean!”

Watching the two, Shinobu sighed with half-opened eyes.<sup>57</sup>

*(That’s no good, Chika-chi. Complimenting someone’s dress is a high-grade technique. There’s no way that Taishi-chi who lacks resourcefulness could ever pull it off.)* Chika only wanted Taishi’s impressions of her figure in a dress. However, not only was he completely oblivious to her appearance, he was completely enamored with Lilith. Seeing this, Chika grew irritated, to the point of breaking into an outburst of anger.

Perhaps empathizing with Chika, Lilith remained silent as expected, producing a wry smile. Shuri also sighed again as she felt sympathy for Chika.<sup>58</sup>

Staring at the heartwarming mood created by the heroes was a person in the shade of a row of pillars. This individual was none other than Nazaar, the one who was conversing with them all previously.

*(So those are the heroes-su... I was finally able to see them with my own eyes-su.)* Nazaar’s glasses glinted as he stared at them, but then he noticed someone’s eyes on himself. After realizing who was looking at him, instead of running away he looked right back.

*(It’s alright-su. I won’t do anything as long as nothing happens-su.)* After making eye contact, it seemed like the individual understood his meaning and looked away.

“Haha, even when he’s past his prime, he’s still plenty scary-su. That Judom-san.”

Yes, the one who he made eye contact with was the guild master of this country, Judom Lankars. He was also invited to this celebration.

# Chapter 8: Everyone's Expectations

Judom Lankars was invited to the festival of birth, so he came. He came not only because he was a friend of the king's, but because he also wanted to see the ones known as heroes with his own eyes.

Previously, a commander of the country's military, a young man known as Vale Kimble, came to him and requested that he train the heroes, yet he bluntly refused.

Judom thought that he would give up afterwards, but Vale came time and time again. Because he was so persistent, Judom declared that he would decide whether he'd train them or not after he saw them with his own eyes.

That was why he came while using this celebration as an excuse. However, he came across a person he didn't expect to see there. That person was Nazaar Skride.

He called himself an artist. The king was in love with his artwork as he already possessed several of Nazaar's works. It was true that his artwork was amazing, capable of touching anyone's heart.

That man, however, wasn't just an artist. Judom knew that very well. And now, he noticed that Nazaar was spying on the heroes behind a pillar. Wondering if he was planning on causing something, Judom focused his gaze toward him.

It seemed like Nazaar had also noticed as he looked in Judom's direction. His eyes were saying: 'I won't do anything to the heroes'.

Judom knew about his personality. He wasn't the kind of person who'd do anything stupid. Understanding that, Judom stopped focusing on him.

Next, he began to look at the heroes.

*(So those are the current heroes... How do I say it... They're just kids.)*

Judom smiled bitterly while watching them laugh like they were having fun.

*(Rudolf, do you plan on leaving our fate in the hands of these kids...?)*

With a sad expression, Judom looked toward the king who was still engaged in a conversation with important people.

*(What are you doing, after sacrificing your own daughter... You're the king, Rudolf. Rather than throwing a festival of birth like this, isn't there something more important that you ought to be doing?)*

Looking away from Rudolph with a grave look on his face, Judom turned back and began to leave.

*(I guess, in the end, I'll have to take action...)*

Thinking that, Judom departed from the venue with a sharp look in his eyes.

That evening, after the festival of birth had ended, King Rudolf was conversing with Minister Dennis Norman in the royal office. The contents of the discussion concerned the meeting requests received from the Evila's Lord, Eveam.

As he unlocked the table's drawer and pulled it open, he took a signed letter from within. It was a letter that contained the details concerning the conference.

As Dennis saw this, he wore a difficult expression.

“As I thought, it seems to be genuine.”

“Umu...”

In actuality, the letter that was held in his hand was not the only one that was sent. The other was a letter detailing the merits of entering into an alliance with them in great detail, one of which included inside information concerning the Gabranth. From the letter alone, it was clearly understood how desperately they were trying to establish an alliance.

Further included in the letter was the current thoughts that the Evila currently held.

“Before, I was called by that man to have a talk. He seems to have hesitated to call it authentic.”

“Judom, huh...”

Indeed. Throughout the conversation, Judom had sprinkled the topic of how the letter from the Evila had arrived soon after they had immediately terminated the war between themselves and the Gabranth.

Of course, as Judom had been constantly advising that there was a need for discussion, he was overjoyed by the news of an alliance conference as he supported it. Yet, Dennis was opposed to it.

Certainly, if they established an alliance, at the very least, the feud between the Evila and the Humas would end, possibly creating an era of peace. However, this obviously could not be considered anything else other than wishful thinking.

From what they could gather so far in their dealings with the Evila, if they naively agreed to their demands, they would undoubtedly face harsh consequences. As their last alliance was betrayed, the Evila that came in the past performed outrageous acts on humans, all for the sake of Evila Conversion.

The most outrageous was of course the Evila Conversion. After hunting countless humans, they were trapped in an experimental facility that the Evila owned. As the experiments ultimately failed, all that

were left were countless corpses.

Although this was a fairly old story, the Evila that had actually conducted such experiments were still alive to this day. This was because they had long lifespans. If they were to once again plot to resume such experiments, this time, they may only be trying to lower the Humans' guard so as to hunt them from their blind spot.

As long as such concerns were unable to be dispelled, Dennis would continue to preach the risks of such an alliance as he advised Rudolf. Yet, Judom argued clearly that the past is the past.

What was really outrageous about this argument was that, in addition to the Evila's conduct, the Humas have performed numerous atrocities that caused grief and incited hatred from the other races. These included placing a bomb inside an Evila to destroy a village, suppressing and enslaving the Gabranth and numerous other acts that the heavens would spit on.

However, the past was the past. If someone were to keep holding their grudges forever, they would lose sight of what was before them, causing them to miss the important things. Each side had erred, yet, that was in the past.

The most important thing was the future and what lay ahead. In order to prevent wars and atrocities that occurred in the past, the bygone days when every race joined hands and coexisted in peace was something that Judom strived for passionately.

From Rudolf's perspective both sides had valid points. They should cautiously approach the Evila, and only associate with them as necessary. Like Dennis said, they should continue planning while remaining vigilant. If there was a chance that they'd be able to work together and coexist, the possibility should be pursued. Both of them were correct.

However, if either of them was mistaken, there was a chance that it would be the end for the Humas Continent. It was this reason why they were unable to come up with a decision.

In reality, they've already made their decision. In order to defeat the Demon Lord, Rudolf sacrificed his daughters. If they retreated and were killed in the process, their sacrifices would be in vain.

When he said so to Judom, he moved toward the king and raised him by his collar as he spoke forcefully.

"You shouldn't waste this chance! Everyone will be able to live peacefully! Your children will be crying with joy in the other world! Isn't that what you want?"

A world in which no one was afraid and everyone could smile. If such a world wasn't created, the life of his daughters would be wasted.

With a distorted expression caused by being held up by the neck, Rudolf quietly told Judom, "Let me think for a bit." Judom furrowed his brows in an unpleasant expression, and, as there was no immediate response, he let go and walked away.

Then, he said,

"Understand? I'll also be coming with you to the conference. To allow you to focus on the peace negotiations, I'll protect you from the shadows. So...as I've asked...please go to the conference."

After he said that, he left the place.

The two left in the royal office wore wry smiles as they remembered the previous exchange. Dennis, in particular, was appalled at the indignation displayed, even if Judom was Rudolf's best friend.

"My goodness. This is the reason why I don't like dealing with such a violent person."

"Dennis."

When Dennis received a sharp glare from Rudolf, he thought he had gone overboard and prepared to make an excuse.

"But, Your Majesty."

"Ahh, everything starts here. Nothing will be wasted. I will..... by no means waste the lives of my daughters."

"S-So, you have made a decision?"

Dennis said with an uncertain tone.

"Aah. Shortly, we'll head to the conference. "

"What? Y-You can't do that!? What about those guys?"

Dennis, in his state of confusion, immediately tried to express his disagreement.

"I know."

"Eh? ...What?"

"I'm going to the conference. Like I said before, the life of my daughter, and those that put their lives on the line, will not be wasted."

"This, Your Majesty."

"Judom will be coming as well. Also.....the heroes."

"The heroes.....you say?"

"Aah, they are the key. As I said before, there is a chance that the Evila might make an unexpected move. In the meantime.....we need to arrange ALL the preparations."

There was no hesitation in those eyes. It might have been the composure of a country's king, yet, sensing his ambition<sup>59</sup>, Dennis swallowed and spoke.

"The plan.....has been decided, huh."

# Chapter 82: To the First Destination

“And? Where is the closest village from here?”

Hiiro asked Silva, who was walking in front of him, while he rode on top of Mikazuki.

Their final destination at the moment was   Xaos  , but it was still extremely far away. They weren’t in any particular hurry so they planned to travel at a leisurely pace.

His objective was to reach   Xaos  and visit the   Fortuna Grand Library  so that he could read the books and materials available only to royalty and people of equal social standing.

Aside from his objective, Hiiro also wanted to look around the Demon World. That was why he thought to visit several villages and other sightseeing places en route to   Xaos  . For that purpose he left the duty of guiding him to Liliyn and company, who were much more familiar with the Demon World than he was.

Of course, Hiiro only required Liliyn for achieving his objective. It wasn’t like he approved of her traveling together with him. When he caught sight of her admission permit for the   Fortuna Grand Library  , he thought that he could use his connection to her to his advantage in order to increase his chances of being able to read the aforementioned books.

As a result of that thinking, though Liliyn was certainly a troublesome woman, Hiiro decided that he would travel together with her. However, it wasn’t like he was planning on a peaceful journey. He determined that if they were to ever become troublesome or useless he would immediately separate from them.

At the moment Hiiro was traveling together with them to acquire information regarding the Demon World, which was why he was asking where the closest village was. The one who answered was not Silva, but Liliyn.

“The closest from here would be the   Asura Race  in the   Raohrb Desert  . Isn’t that right, Silva?”

“You are correct. In my opinion, however, I believe it would be best to avoid that place...”

Hiiro frowned at Silva who anxiously said so.

“What do you mean?”

“The   Raohrb Desert  is an extremely dangerous place.”

“Hou.”

“A boundless desert stretches across the horizon, but rather than the extreme heat, there is a slight problem regarding the   Asura Race  .”

“Hm? The   Asura Race  is a species of   Evila  , aren’t they? Is there really a problem?”

“I’m afraid there is. Their race controls the desert. I have heard that they do not take well to outsiders trespassing in their territory.”

Hiiro had heard that the different species of Evila didn’t interact much with one another. Of course there were exceptions, but to the Asura Race it seemed to be an obvious rule. It was possible that they hated others that entered their territory.

“But they won’t suddenly attack us, will they?”

“...”

“Oi, what’s with the silence?”

Silva moved closer to Hiiro and whispered into his ear.

“Ojou-sama is also an Evila . Well, Ojou-sama is a bit of a special case, but it would not be wrong to basically think of her as a typical Evila ...”

Hearing that, Hiiro inadvertently looked toward Liliyn and remembered when he first met her and the few days that followed after.

“Mu<sup>60</sup>? What is it?”

*(That’s the typical...? Does that mean that I should be wary of the Evila as a whole...?)* Suddenly being tested by poison, extremely powerful but getting assaulted by her underlings, suddenly being forcefully asked to be her servant. Hiiro understood Liliyn as being an extremely abnormal existence.

Speaking of which, Hiiro also heard that the maid, Shamoe, had also been driven away by the Evila . In other words, he determined that he would have to change how he thought of the Evila from now on.

Hiiro believed they wouldn’t suddenly attack without warning, but he would need to be prepared for anything since it wouldn’t be strange for the unexpected to happen.

“Speaking of which, what kind of people are the Asura Race ?”

Hiiro thought that having even a little information would be helpful in finding a way to protect himself.

“Hmm, about that...”

Silva looked apologetic.

“What? You don’t know anything?”

“Please forgive me. The Asura Race do not leave the desert often, and I hear that their population is relatively low. Therefore, there is very little information regarding them. I have only heard that they once forcibly expelled people who had accidentally entered the desert.”

“I see. So only rumors...”

If that was the case, Hiiro couldn’t completely trust what Silva said. However, there was no smoke without fire. Even if the rumors weren’t true, something similar probably happened. Either it was exactly

as the rumors stated, or... they may be an even more problematic race.

“What shall we do? Shall we continue towards the desert?”

“I wonder...”

“Mu? What is it? Getting scared?”

Hihiro became irritated hearing Liliyn’s words.

“Of course I’m not scared. Fine, let’s go and meet those of the Asura Race or whatever they’re called.”

“Kukuku, I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Liliyn welcomed danger. Because that way she’d be less bored.

“By the way kozou, don’t you think that you’re the only one who’s relaxing?”

“What do you mean?”

It seemed like Hihiro truly didn’t understand the meaning behind Liliyn’s question.

“Don’t play dumb. Why are you the only one riding that bird?”

Liliyn snappily pointed at Mikazuki.

“Of course I am. Because she’s mine.”

“Kuikuikui!”

Mikazuki flapped her wings, *basabasabasa*, like she was embarrassed and raised her voice in a happy tone.

“Eei! Why am I, your master, the one who’s walking while you, my servant, are relaxing on top of that bird!?”

“Shut up. Who the hell’s your servant.”

“Let me ride that too!”

“I refuse.”

“Let me ride it!”

“No way.”

“I said, let me ride it!”

“Walk, Hikikomori.”

“Who’s a Hikikomori!?”



Liliyn shouted out without concealing her anger.

“F-Fun<sup>61</sup>. If it’s come to this I’ll ride it using force!”

Saying that, Liliyn jumped towards Mikazuki’s back.

*Sasa*<sup>62</sup>!

Mikazuki, however, immediately moved out of the way. Liliyn, who missed her mark, landed gracefully on her feet and glared at Mikazuki. Mikazuki freezed due to her glare, but...

“Oi, leave it at that. Rather, Akaloli, you’re a rather despicable person to force yourself on someone who doesn’t want it.”

“Ugu...”

“Don’t you think so too, Jii-san?”

“Ojou-sama, I cannot condone your actions.”

“Whaaat!?”

Liliyn let out a surprised voice hearing Silva’s words. Shamoe, who was nearby, began to act nervously.

With a disappointed look on her face, Liliyn looked toward Hiiro and pointed her finger.

“I-I’ll definitely make you mine!”

“Nofofofofo! That is definitely our Ojou-sama!”

“I-I-I don’t r-really get what’s going on, but you’re amazing Ojou-sama!”

Her two servants praised her.

“Instead of fooling around, let’s hurry up and get a move on.”

“Eei! How about you read the mood a little!”

Hiiro was unsociable as usual.

# Chapter 83: The Ashura Tribe

After Hiiro walked for a while, he saw an entrance to the desert.

(*This is the Raohrb Desert* <sup>63</sup> *huh?*) The moment he entered the desert, he could feel warm, dry air blowing against his cheeks.

Up until now, there had been no wind or daylight this strong. It was almost like he had entered a completely different world.

According to Silva, the Demon World was usually like this. It was normal for an environment to change drastically. It was said that the Evila race was strong because they could withstand these harsh environments.

Hiiro couldn't see anything ahead, only the horizon. After they walked for a bit, they stopped because of Liliyn.

“Oi, what’s wrong?”

“Kukuku, oi, Shamoe.”

“Y-Yes!”

Liliyn called Shamoe while ignoring Hiiro.

“Listen Shamoe, don’t leave my side. Got it?”

“Eh? Y-Yes!”

It was unknown why Liliyn said that, but Shamoe trusted her fully, so she stuck close to her. Silva too, without saying anything, stood close to her.

But not Hiiro. Hiiro didn’t understand anything she said, so he asked.

“Oi, what’re you doing?”

“Kukuku, you will understand soon enough.”

She said that and continued walking again, Silva and Shamoe also walking together with her.

“Kui?”

Mikazuki said that as if asking if Hiiro would go with them as well. Hiiro sighed.

“There’s no choice but to go.”

Hiiro said that while dragging Mikazuki.

There was a mountain of sand ahead, their destination was ahead of that. When they passed it, Hiiro stopped and was bewildered by the view.

There was a person there... He had never seen anyone like that before. “Who?”

Violet hair. Their hairstyle was like a samurai’s. His hair should be around 20 cm long. Blue uniform. A bandanna to cover the nose and mouth. And two swords behind their back.

The guy was folding his arms and glaring this way. It was obviously full of killing intent.

Hiiro’s party was on guard and slowly started approaching him. When they got close, that person silently spoke.

“I’ll ask you one question. Do you want to leave or become a corpse? Choose.”

What a dangerous question. They couldn’t ignore the pressure of that question. Depending on our answer, he wouldn’t do anything right?

“Who are you? You’re in the way. Move.”

Hiiro responded just like that. The person glared even more.

“Looks like you don’t know the rules here. Then, I’ll tell you.”

His eyes shined suspiciously.

“Kukuku, careful kozou.”

Liliyn was smiling happily, Hiiro wondered what was the matter.

*Zabazaba*

Suddenly something sprung up from the sand.

*(What!?)*

Hiiro held his hand in front of his eyes to prevent the sand getting into them. And then, he looked again....

It was a person. He could at least see three people here. They all held weapons and started coming with killing intent.

One toward Liliyn, one toward Hiiro and one toward Silva. All of them were wearing blue clothes and turban-like hoods, tied violet hair falling to their waists, bandannas to cover their mouths and on their backs, twin blades like that guy earlier.

*(The Evila are all like this?)*

To come without initiating a conversation, the Evila were such a warlike race? As if Liliyn was not enough.

Hiiro immediately drew his Thorn Sword Piercer to fight.

*Kakiiii<sup>64</sup>!*

Their blades clashed and sparks flew.

“Ku!”

They were stronger than Hiiro thought. Hiiro was pushed back and clenched his teeth. It seemed the enemy also thought that Hiiro’s power was stronger than they expected. After staring at each other, they dashed toward each other again.

But the enemy didn’t fall from the air, he instead used steps to maintain altitude and flew over Hiiro.

*(Don’t tell me, Mikazuki!?)*

The enemy probably decided to kill Mikazuki first.

“Oi! Drooling Bird! Move away!”

Saying that, Mikazuki avoided the enemy that was trying to attack her from the back.

She never thought that the enemy would fall down like that. The enemy, stunned at Hiiro’s actions, had no other choice but to attack him again.

*Kiiiiin!*

Once again, their blades clashed. This time, the enemy might have grasped Hiiro’s power since he didn’t get blown away. Now, he was confident that he was stronger than Hiiro.

He has ascertained his victory. Suddenly...

*Pishun!*

Suddenly, Hiiro disappeared from his sight. He was confused at the situation.

On Hiiro’s arm the word   Speed               could be seen. He had activated the word. Hiiro was also confident in fighting only with his katana, but he knew that his footwork and power were worse than the enemy’s. That was why he used   Word Magic   .

“Eat this!”

He appeared behind his opponent and slashed vertically.

*Bushun!*

Blood dripped onto the sand, but...

*(Che! Too shallow huh...)*

The enemy managed to react at the last moment and avoided fatal injury.

The enemy that had avoided Hiiro’s attack lost his bandanna that covered his face. As such, his true face is revealed. Rather than a man, it was more like a boy. It was without a doubt a bishounen<sup>65</sup>. On the boy’s

mouth, a straight scar, and blood was dripping.

Wiping the blood, the boy said...

“You..are strong, I will get a bit serious.”

The boy drew the blade on his back.

Then...

“Wait!”

The one who sad that, was the topknot dude. Hiiro and the boy glanced at him. He seemed grumpy, but they didn’t know why.

“Mu? Is it over already?”

“It seems so.”

Hiiro looked at Liliyn and Silva. It seemed they already defeated their opponents. Liliyn was trampling her opponent’s head, and Silva was locking his opponent’s arm joint.

“It seems, you’re not average people.”

“If you think so, let us through already.”

“Fu, sorry, but that won’t happen. Because...”

He drew his twin blades, which were black. It was what people usually called Black Swords. He then put up his guard.

“Because I will kill you all!”

Hearing that guy, Liliyn’s laughter echoed..

“Kukuku. You will kill me? What a funny joke.”

“It’s not a joke, even if you’re just a brat, I won’t allow anyone into this desert!”

“Hou..”

A dark smile could be seen. Liliyn emitted blood lust to overwhelm the enemy’s killing intent.

The enemy stomped his feet and flew.

“Che!”

She smacked her lips because she couldn’t see him. The enemy came down to strike, but there was nobody there.

“Here!”

A shiver ran down on his back. Just when did she get beside him?

*Dogo!*

The enemy took a considerable impact from Liliyn's kick and showed a distorted face. He managed to adjust his body when he got blown off. When he landed, Liliyn's sharp nail was already in front of him.

The topknot guy was startled. He never thought Liliyn possessed this much power. Even if he was going all out, she beat him as if ridiculing him. In that instant, he could see the little girl's wicked smile.

He thought he was going to die now.

*Dosu!*

Something interrupted and Liliyn put some distance between them. The topknot guy was drenched in sweat, in front of him was a blade<sup>66</sup>.

“What's he doing? That boy.”

Liliyn took a glance at the defeated enemy, it was that boy who was fighting with Hihiro earlier.

# Chapter 84: Battle in Raohrb Desert

“I can’t... let you kill him.”

The boy spoke, as if unaffected by Liliyn’s blood lust. Hiiro’s attention was captured by the young man’s strange actions.

From the topknot man’s atmosphere, and actions, it was likely that he was a man of some power. But Liliyn was head and shoulders above him. With the way things were going, Liliyn’s claws would definitely find their way into his heart. The man himself was unable to keep up with any of her movements, and he probably had resolved himself for whatever fate awaited him. Even Hiiro could barely follow Liliyn, and that was only because he was a distance away.

But he could barely trace them. If he were to go against speed like that, it would be difficult.

*(But that boy easily followed them.)*

Right, the boy was easily following the two’s fight with his eyes. He had perfectly timed himself when he used both of his arms to throw his curved blade, and put a hold on the fight. To be able to do that, the boy must have been quite powerful himself.

While Hiiro wasn’t looking, the topknot man was by the boy’s side. And surprisingly, he lowered himself to his knees.

“I-I apologize, Chief!”

Hiiro was startled at hearing the word, ‘Chief’... Liliyn was the same, and her eyebrows twitched for a moment. But she quickly nodded as if to accept the fact.

“Hmmmmmm. I realized that quite a powerful person had been hidden in the sand, but I never expected the brat to be the head here.”

“So she noticed...”

The topknot man remorsefully spit out those words. In reality, their group had noticed the moment Hiiro’s group had set foot into the desert. They had hidden several of their companions under the sand in order to initiate a surprise attack. But it seemed that Liliyn had already noticed such.

It was at that time that Hiiro started to understand the words she said. At that time, she had suddenly signaled Shamoe to stay by her side. And she also cautioned Hiiro himself. She had already noticed that they were surrounded by enemies.

“If you don’t want me to fight that man, does that mean you’ll take me on? Hmm?”

A fearless smile floated on Liliyn’s face, but the boy shook his head.

“Did you come... to... lay waste to our desert?”

“We had no such intentions.”

“Then... why are you here?”

“We’re just traveling. We’re escorting that brat.”

Liliyn signaled to Hiiro, and the boy shifted his gaze to him.

“Are you... from the Ashura Tribe?”

When asked, the boy gave a firm nod.

“I see. It seems that you really do live in this desert. By the way, do you have any plans on letting us pass peacefully?”

Hiiro gripped his sword as he let out those words. The boy reached for the pair of blades on his back, and slowly drew them. But the second both blades had come out of their sheathes, Hiiro knit his brows. The reason being, that instead of the edges one would find on a normal sword, the ends of the blades were cut rectangular, like building blocks. They clearly lacked the ability to cut.

They dropped the weapons, which were difficult to even call swords, to the ground, and they immediately sunk into the sand. They probably weighed quit a bit.

And he took the two black swords held by the topknot man. Hiiro noticed it now, that the black swords the man held were of the same Japanese katana design as Piercer. The boy pointed the blade of the two weapons at Hiiro and prepared himself.

“You shall... not pass.”

“...I see.”

Hiiro put even more power into the hand grasping his sword. The boy was probably restricting his own movements by carrying around those large slabs of metal on his back.

He removed those restraints and took the swords, no, katanas, of the topknot man. And the fighting stance he took was well refined. Hiiro determined that the true owner of these two swords was probably the boy.

*(It’s as if he wasn’t the slightest bit serious until now... interesting.)* In order to confront his enemy with his full might, he prepared to use his Word Magic.

*(The thing I’ll need to be careful of is his speed. I don’t know how heavy those swords are, but seeing as he could keep up with Akaloli’s movements, I should assume he can move at that speed as well...)* Without taking his eyes off of the boy, he put his right arm behind his back and wrote Speed. He set it to activate remotely with his Invocation Management.

Perhaps the other side noticed him using magic, but the boy’s actions grew more vigilant.

“Wait a second, kozou.”



That one was directed at Hiiro.

“What? I’ll be the one to take him on. Don’t step in.”

If Liliyn tried to KS<sup>67</sup> him, he wouldn’t get any EXP. For Hiiro, who wanted to raise his level all at once, fighting a strong enemy was all that he could wish for.

“Just wait. There’s something I want to ask.”

Saying that, she turned her head to the boy.

“Oi, you. Why are you relentlessly purging trespassers? It’s not like this desert belongs to you or anything.”

Her words were on the mark. Though they had heard rumors of the Ashura Tribe rejecting intruders, that was just because they wanted to protect their territory.

The boy spoke of laying waste to the desert. But when they tried to precede any further, the boy persistently barred them from passing. As Liliyn was curious as to what he was hiding in the desert, she pressed him with a question.

“As if you, who are blessed with ignorance, would understand our feelings!”

The topknot man suddenly shouted out in an angry voice. But as if she didn’t feel any rage at all, Liliyn responded.

“Hmm, are you a fool? That’s why I’m asking. Just answer already.”

“What!? You bastard!”

The boy raised his hand to order the man to silence. Understanding the meaning of the gesture, the topknot man closed his mouth. And the boy turned to Liliyn once more.

“...Got it... will speak.”

“In this desert... no, in the heart of this desert... a certain monster lives. Intruders... anger him... no good. We... in trouble. So... here, I eliminate you.”

His peculiar speech pattern made it hard to understand, but after a bit more conversation, the meaning got across.

“To summarize, you of the Ashura Tribe are making sure that monster doesn’t get angry. So you’re trying to prevent those that don’t know anything from wandering around here?”

“Yes.”

“And that monster is very tough, so you can’t do anything with your own power?”

“Don’t want... anyone to die.”

If they fought without heeding the casualties, then perhaps they would have a chance of victory. But the

Ashura Tribe were few in number. Among them, many were too old or young for battle. They especially didn't want to expose their children, who shouldered their hopes for the future, to battle. That was why they were living inconspicuously as to not do anything to provoke the monster.

"But can't you just leave the desert then?"

The one who answered Hiroyuki was the topknot man.

"We can't do that."

With a somber expression, the man clenched his teeth.

"Why?"

"The desert is our home. We're a race that lives and withers with the sand. Also... here lies the grave of the Ashura Tribe. We can't abandon it."

Near here was the Ashura Tribe's settlement. From the days of old, they had lived here. And this went without saying, but plenty of them met their ends here as well. For them, a grave stone was erected. That place was called the Grave Tower, and it was made by carving out a large formation of rock.

To the Ashura Tribe, relations within the clan came before all else, and they respected their dead more than anyone. When one died, they believed that while the body became an empty husk, the soul would return to the clan. They were unable to abandon their graves along with the desert.

"Then can't you just take that grave marker with you?"

"Don't speak the impossible. Do you think we could violate our precious treasure like that!?"

Well, once you've buried a man, you couldn't really dig him up to move him.

"And preventing you from passing is also for your sake! You're no match for that monster! If you don't want to die, then leave quickly!"

"I refuse."

"...What?"

Hiroyuki's prompt decision was shocking, but more so was the fact that it was a refusal.

"Why must I, for some monster I've never even met, abandon the road I came down?"

"W-Weren't you listening to what I was saying!? I don't care whatsoever if you're killed by that monster. But what do you plan on doing if that monster comes at us in its rage!?"

"Hmph. Then we just have to kill it, right?"

"Wha... Y-You can only say that because you've never seen it! It's too late to run once you've gotten it angry!"

"I'll say it as many times as I must. We will cross here. If you plan on getting in our way, we'll cross blades too."

“Dammit!”

The topknot man gave Hiiro, who wouldn’t listen to a word he was saying, a scornful glare. But the boy by his side simply silently looked in Hiiro’s direction. And he put his hand on the man’s shoulder that was trembling with anger.

“C-Chief...?”

“...Stand back.”

“U-Understood.”

Following the boy’s words, the man stepped back.

“Oi, Akaloli. As I said, I’ll be the one taking him down.”

“...Fine by me. But I don’t know if he plans on fighting.”

“What?”

The boy returned the swords in his hands to their sheathes.

“What are you doing? Are you saying we can pass?”

The boy silently stared at Hiiro again. And he quietly opened his mouth.

“Are you going... no matter what?”

“Yeah, taking a detour would be a pain.”

“...Got it. Then... I follow.”

“What?”

“C-Chief! Are you sure?”

The man raised an alarmed voice at the boy’s proposal. But the boy gave a light nod, showing his intent.

“...Understood. Then I’ll return, and inform our comrades of these events.”

“Yes... be careful.”

“Yes. Then.”

After the topknot man left the area, the boy turned to Hiiro again.

“Introduction... late. I... Camus<sup>68</sup>. I’m the Ashura Race ... Chief.”

By his disinterested expression, and his youth, one wouldn’t think him to be the head of a race. Even if, as an Evila, his age conflicted with his appearance, looking at a boy that looked to be of a similar age to himself, Hiiro couldn’t help but doubt him being the chief.

“Now, I’ll take you... to home. There... please determine.”

“Determine what?”

“... Monster’s... terror.”

For the first time, a speck of fire glowed in the back of the young man’s eyes. He was definitely showing his anger. Though Camus appeared to be devoid of emotions, he harbored quite a resentment for the monster.

Hiiro crossed his arms and thought of whether or not to follow the boy. Seeing the Ashura Tribe’s settlement was definitely one of the goals of this journey. It would be beneficial if they had someone to lead them there. Of course, there was no need to drop their guard.

“Isn’t it fine?”

Liliyn said as such, so Hiiro directed his gaze to the others. Silva nodded with a slight smile on his face. Shamoe was fidgeting by Liliyn’s side, and it seemed that her mind was unable to keep up with the sudden development.

Putting the maid aside, it seemed the other two would follow without complaint. With Liliyn’s strength, no matter how strong the opponent, she should be able to take them out if they showed any signs of deceiving the group.

“Got it. Then I’ll have you be our guide.”

The boy nodded, turned his back to Hiiro’s group and started walking. His men also got into rank and file behind him, and quietly followed.

*(A monster of the desert... I bet it has quite a bit of strength.)* The strong Camus was taking such an attitude, so the monster should be something ferocious and uncontrollable, even for him.

As they walked, Hiiro approached Silva to see if he had any relevant information on the monster, but he didn’t know anything. Liliyn’s answer was the same.

“But doesn’t it sound interesting? Things like this aren’t bad for entertainment.”

“You’re one to talk, after you holed yourself into that mansion for so long.”

“Mu... listen here, kozou! I only stayed there to accomplish my own ambitions! Don’t forget that!”

Liliyn insisted this while pointing her finger at Hiiro, but Hiiro closed his eyes halfway and let out a light sigh.

“More importantly. How does that guy look from your perspective?”

“Hmm? So you want to know? Hm?”

An irritating smile manifested, so Hiiro got slightly pissed off.

“Just answer the question.”

“Hmhm. Let’s see, he was the Chief, right? I think he at least has the power to back the title.”

“So he has something of that level?”

“Don’t play dumb. Since you also use a katana, you should understand that better than I.”

Right. After seeing Camus’s strength firsthand, Hihiro had a slight grasp of it. Neither side was serious, but still, it was apparent that he had a considerable amount of power.

“In regards to physical ability alone, you wouldn’t stand a chance. And his magic is still a mystery. It may have been good that you didn’t fight him alone there.”

Liliyn made an ecstatic grin as she spoke.

“Quite joking around. If we fought, I would have won.”

“Kukuku. Where does that confidence come from.. Well, when that battle actually comes to pass, make sure to entertain me. Kukuku.”

Her phrasing made it seem as if she had seen through Hihiro’s true strength. It was true that she said she was accompanying him to find out his secrets, and to reveal his identity. The feeling of having her stare at him while he fought wasn’t a nice one. It felt as if he was being stripped naked and examined.

*(Come at me if you will. I’ll look for a time when this one isn’t around.)* With that decision, Hihiro stared at Camus’s back as he walked ahead.

# Chapter 85: Liliyn and Sivan

The desert sun glared down onto the group, causing them to sweat profusely. After walking for a while, the group saw something that they could rejoice about.

“Is that...an oasis?”

He thought it was an illusion, however, as Liliyn’s group looked in that direction as well, Hihiro felt relieved. At the same time, their stomachs growled. Since they had walked for a long time, their constitution had weakened as well. As it was almost lunch time, their stomachs let out a thunderous warning.

“That place...residence.”

Camus pointed at the oasis. It seemed like they’d be able to take a break soon.

It was an area covered in greenery about the size of the Tokyo Dome<sup>69</sup>. They were also able to see a pond there as well. Beside the pond, there was a single governing building that looked like a mongolian yurt.

*(It’s my first time seeing a yurt...it’s bigger than I expected.)* A yurt was a round tent supported by two pillars at the center. The frame radiated out from the center of the yurt to form the roof. A thick sheet made out of wool was then draped over the framework to form the roof and the walls.

The yurt was about 4-6 meters in diameter. There were also several pieces of furniture nearby just like a dwelling place.

“Ah, Camus, it’s Camus.”

“It’s true.”

“Camus, Camus.”

Several children left the yurt and ran toward Camus. Camus lowered his body and hugged each of them one after another.

*(He is adored by the children, huh.)*

Looking at the scene before him, Hihiro felt nostalgic. When he was at the orphanage, as Hihiro was the oldest person among them, he was entrusted with taking care of the younger children. Even though he was doing it unwillingly, he smiled wryly as he remembered the innocent smiles of the younger children.

“Ah, hey, hey, Camus Camus! Who are those people?”

When one of the children asked an adult woman near Camus, she turned to look at him with caution.

“Hey, lower your head and ask.”

“Eh eh~ but Mama, Camus Camus said he is fine with this!”

“That is right!”

“Camus Camus is Camus Camus!”

All the children talked back to the adults. The adults responded with helpless shrugs. The person with the topknot that had returned beforehand emerged.

“.....Chief.”

If you looked closely, there was another person near him. He was an old man who had so many wrinkles that you could feel the number of years he had lived. Furthermore, both his eyes were closed. There were burn marks on the top of his eyes, which might have been the reason why he could no longer open them. Furthermore, he had a prosthetic right leg.

“Jii-chan...will you listen?”

“Un, yes I’ll hear it.”

After the old man responded, he slowly approached Hiiro and his group. It was clear that his eyes were not open, yet he was staring at Hiiro.

Then, he just glanced over Liliyn’s group and simply confirmed their presence. Hiiro noticed that the old man furrowed his brows when he looked at Liliyn. He then faced Hiiro one more time. Hiiro stared back at him without knitting his eyebrows.

“.....I see, what an interesting group of people.”

He even smiled further, increasing the number of wrinkles on his face.

“Right, Camus, I heard most of it from Jinwu, but after seeing it, are you still going to proceed?”

“At that time...I will stop it...life... life on the line.”

The old man laughed happily and said.

“Hohohoho, that is impossible.”

“Eh...why?”

He was surprised by the response, and put on a puzzled expression.

“Camus, you are strong. You are strong enough not to lose to those older than you, but...”

He turned to look at Liliyn with a his eyes closed smiling.

“That is something else.”

“.....That?”

Camus moved his gaze toward Liliyn in the same way as the old man. Liliyn crossed her arms and opened

her mouth.

“That was a bit rough, right...Sivan?”

Not only Hihiro, but also Silva and Shamoe were surprised by her response. For Liliyn to know someone that even Silva didn't know, it must have been a very old friend. From that response, Hihiro also knew why Sivan had looked anxiously at Liliyn.

“You know her.....Jii-chan?”

“Yes, I didn't expect to meet her again in this place.”

“Same here. For you to still be alive, you must be really stubborn, huh.”

“Hoh hoh hoh, to be greeted in such a manner.”

“Hey, you are acquaintances right?”

They responded to Hihiro by nodding and saying ‘Ah’.

“Once upon a time, for a little bit. You sure have put on a lot of years.”

“Do you have any idea how many years have passed since then? Well, you have no idea because you look just like before.”

“Impressive, how do you know?”

“I knew from your voice and atmosphere. When I lost my sight, I became sensitive to those things.”

“.....What happened to your eyes and legs?”

Liliyn put on a serious expression while looking at him “.....If it is possible, I don't want you to know.”

“Was it from the monster in the...desert?”

“That's right.”

“A person like...you?”

“Hoh hoh, it is harder to win when you get older. Unlike you.”

“Fur~n, it's only in your case, you received those wounds from protecting someone, right?”

“Jii-chan.....”

Sivan tried to stop him from interjecting, yet, Camus interrupted him and continued.

“Jii-chan.....protected me.....that was all. I was...too weak...that was all.”

At that moment, his expressionless face changed as he raised his eyebrows in a painful expression. From that, they were able to identify the cause of those wounds. When he was fighting the demon, Camus was targeted so Sivan jumped in to protect him. They were not sure what the demon did after, however, because of that, Sivan had lost his eyes and right leg.



“Camus, my boy. As a chief, you had an obligation to protect the family. I was once the chief as well. Right now, you are the chief of this clan. As a chief, you shouldn’t put on such a sad face.”

Even though Sivan could not see him, he seemed to be able to feel Camus’s pain.

“Stay vigilant and resolute, and become a reliable man.”

“Un...I understand...sorry.”

“Then, don’t apologize so easily either.”

Sivan shrugged in amazement.

“Sivan, what is the identity of the demon of the desert? Why didn’t you take part? If it’s strong then...wait, no, even if it was an SSS-rank, you would still be able to defeat it if you tried. Don’t tell me that it’s using some sort of trick. Tell me the real reason.”

Her words surprised those around them. Of course, Hiiro was surprised as well. The story wasn’t the real reason and, like everyone else, he simply looked at Liliyn.

Most members of the Ashura Clan stared at Liliyn vigilantly. Yet, Liliyn completely ignored their stares.

“....As usual, you can’t hide it, can you? You are just as annoying as before, Lolibaba.”

“Fu~n, why don’t you suffocate to death in ladies’ underwear like you dreamed about, you old bastard.”

They stared at each other as they felt explosive sparks being exchanged between them. Everyone around them swallowed uncomfortably. Hiiro and Silva stood silently and observed the scene before them.

*(That said, for the Akaloli to say whatever she wants around that weak old man.)* Some people would think suffocating in women’s underwear was something to enjoy, but to Hiiro it was something sad; very, very, sad.

They were stuck in that position for some time, then they separated and laughed faintly.

“Hoh Hoh Hoh.”

“Kukuku.”

When the dark mood suddenly dispersed, everyone around them grew surprised.

“Come with me, guests. I have something to show you all.”

Sivan walked in a certain direction, scraping his leg along the sand. As expected, Hiiro and the group followed behind him soon after.

# Chapter 86: The Ashura's Tenacity

Sivan guided Hiiro and his companions to a single yurt. The residence seemed to be three times bigger than the rest they had seen. When they entered inside, they frowned as the smell of antiseptic and blood entered their nostrils.

Ten men and women were lying in beds built out of grass and leaves. However, they were not simply lying down. No matter who you looked at it, a part of their body was wrapped up in blood-stained bandages. Upon closer inspection, the ground seemed to have been drenched in blood in several places.

As the others saw this spectacle, Shamoe trembled while covering her mouth with both hands. Liliyn also frowned unpleasantly.

“This is one of the reasons why we cannot move-ja<sup>70</sup>.”

If it was only one or two injured, then it would have been possible to somehow carry them. However, as the seriously injured were well over a dozen, one could comprehend that carrying them out would be no easy feat. Furthermore, from what Hiiro had heard, there were also those whose conditions were so critical that moving them would prove dangerous.

“Of course, another reason is because the Grave Tower is near here. That’s where the deceased family members are buried-ja.”

“You don’t have a cure for this?”

Hiiro voiced the doubts in his mind.

“~Yes we have. However, the medicinal herbs don’t seem to be effective on the wounds given by the monsters in this desert... also, all of the villagers in here need the cure. Even if they searched for the cure in this desert, it’s risky to send our combat capable people right now-ja~”

Now that Hiiro thought about it, it was uncertain that such a cure would grow in the center of the desert. The Ashura Tribe could not go out into desert to search for the cure as a brutal monster was lying await outside the village perimeter. If they were to send out an ordinary person, it would take too much time. Thus, they needed a strong person to move.

Yet, those that fit the criteria within the Ashura Tribe were very few. Of course, strong people like Camus existed. However, they were in charge of preventing other intruders from passing through the desert, so they could not risk decreasing their guardians on this desert.

“Even so, in this oasis, medicinal herbs grow and are used to treat the injured. Yet, this is still a terrible situation for us~”

“It really is terrible.”

Hiiro crossed his arms and shut his eyes. He was sure Liliyn and Silva were looking at him, thinking that Hiiro could cure them as they had witnessed Hiiro's recovery magic that he had showed them previously. However, Hiiro ignored them as he had no obligation to cure them.

Among the two, Silva in particular was looking at Hiiro, contemplating whether he should ask Hiiro to help the injured. He also understood that Hiiro was concealing his magic. However, many people here were on the verge of death.

In reality, Hiiro wanted to bend his principles slightly and cure these people. As Liliyn stared at Hiiro, she noticed him giving off an atmosphere that indicated he would not speak any further. She shrugged her shoulders as she made a wry smile.

“Oi Sivan.”

“~Ja. What is it Liliyn?”

“There are other reasons right? Even if the opponent is a Rank SSS monster, the Ashura Tribe would be able to manage if you poured all your efforts into it. So why didn't you?”

“.....”

“There's also another thing that's strange. Even though you do not possess the power to return to active duty, I do not believe that you would be beaten by such a monster. Even if you were carrying the burden of this tribe. Though I do not know what happened to your right leg, I did not expect you to be defeated, not to mention you losing both of your eyes... What are you hiding?”

As Liliyn spoke those words, her eyes sparkled momentarily. Camus and the topknot man were at a loss for words upon hearing Liliyn's inquisition. Seeing their appearance, Liliyn understood that her speculation was right on the money.

Following this, Sivan took a deep breath and finally opened his mouth.

“As one would expect of the Red Rose Witch. I'm really astonished by your perceptiveness.”

“~Fufun, Naturally.”

Liliyn proudly puffed out her chest, her face slackening slightly.

“.....The monster in the desert. It is..... The previous Chief of this tribe.”

“Previous Chief of this tribe? What do you mean, Sivan?”

Liliyn knitted her eyebrows suspiciously.

“~Unja~ that child. It happened when Camus was little.”

Sivan soberly worked his lips.

Thirty years ago, an incident occurred in the desert. It started from just one monster. That monster was of a species that made the desert its natural habitat. Following this, that monster mutated and changed its form.

The name of that monster was the Desert Tortoise . That monster's defining trait was the big shell on its back. One day, the Desert Tortoise that should have had skin tinted green, was now filled with a hue of a toxic deep purple.

What was more, the Desert Tortoise was not an aggressive monster. Yet it began to attack other monsters. Moreover, the demon wouldn't just attack. It would devour any of its defeated prey.

Following this, the attributes of the monster it had devoured would surprisingly begin to alter the body of the Desert Tortoise. The monster it had devoured was called the Mad Scorpion . The attribute that had grown onto the Desert Tortoise was a poisonous tail.

Furthermore, another monster, the Mad Golem , possessed rugged skin as its trait. In the same way, that monster was also devoured. The Desert Tortoise's body began to mysteriously change.

The Ashura Tribe assumed that, should this continue, not only would the monsters in the desert be devoured, but it would soon bear its fangs toward them. As such, they decided to take this chance to slay it, while it was still underdeveloped.

The Chief of the Ashura Tribe at that time was Rigund. He was Camus's real father. His ability was also well known throughout the tribe. Especially in combat, he possessed the strength that others yearned for. That kind of person was Camus's pride.

Rigund, along with his companions, headed forth to slay the Desert Tortoise. If it was him, the people believed that he would certainly kill it and return back safely.

However, after coming back, Rigund was in tatters. He was covered with wounds all over his body. Others were stunned by his appearance. Even Sivan could only blankly stare at him in surprise.

The people knew that the Desert Tortoise was strong. Yet, they did not expect Rigund's following words.

"That existence is not a naturally born Desert Tortoise. There is a puppeteer on its back."

Everyone was taken aback by Rigund's word. Yet, one person moved. Sivan asked Rigund again with a stern expression. However—

*Dogogogogon<sup>71</sup>!*

They heard the roar of the Desert Tortoise assault them.

Moreover, the mysterious person clad in a black robe was seen standing on its shell. As everyone witnessed this, they understood that what Rigund said was true.

Camus saw his father was completely exhausted. However, seeing his comrades, anger swelled within him as Camus faced the demon. Even though his father was the strongest in the tribe, there was no guarantee that Camus would be able to win.

Rigund turned pale as he saw Camus's actions. He desperately moved his aching body. However, he was unable to shield Camus from the attack of the Desert Tortoise. Sharp fingernails approached Camus mercilessly.

Camus, for the first time, felt the murderous intent behind an attack that could kill him. Camus froze in fear. Everyone thought Camus was going to die. However, at that time, Sivan appeared, barely protecting him in time.

It was because of this that Sivan's right leg had suffered injury. Furthermore, the attack of the Desert Tortoise had not yet ended. This time, the monster used its poisonous tail to attack. Sivan used what little strength he had to carry Camus away from that location.

Even though they dodged the tail attack by jumping backwards, in that moment, vines grew out and clung onto their feet. Sivan's movement became restricted. He determined that this was caused by magic. Following this, he traced the flow of magic and understood that the robed person was the one who had cast it. Moreover, as tremendous magic was imbued into the vines, they would not budge at all.

Sivan struggled desperately. Following this, the poisonous tail shot something at Sivan. The discharged venom splashed onto both of Sivan's eyes. He felt pain in his eyes, as if they were set on fire.

The Desert Tortoise used its tail again, aiming for the killing blow. In that instant, however, the tail was cut. The vines restraining Sivan were also severed. The robed person saw this and expressed their admiration.

Having saved Sivan was Rigund, his breathing disordered from pain and exhaustion. A black sword was gripped in his hand. However, in the following instance, Rigund sheathed his dual katanas and threw them to Camus. He then grabbed a curved sword beside him as he poised himself.

He spoke to his comrades, telling them to take Sivan and run away. They proceeded to recover Sivan. Camus simply watched his father's back, silently.

“Go already!”

“Father!”

Camus did not want to go. His father was covered with wounds. There was no chance of him winning this. Camus also understood that his father was buying time for the others to escape.

“Do not hesitate!”

“.....!?”

“You are my son! That's why you should not hesitate in what you are doing!”

“F...Father....”

Camus trembled from his father's words. He stood up and picked up the dual katanas before leaving with heavy steps.

“Hou~ Are you running away?”

A dark, low voice entered Camus's ears. It belonged to the robed individual standing on the shell of the Desert Tortoise.

“Abandoning your father, you choose to ungracefully escape and survive....? Amusing.”

“....You....”

Camus looked back and clenched his fist. Though the person was covered in a hood, Camus was able to confirm that there was a cross wound on his cheek.

“Camus!”

Camus regained his senses upon hearing his father.

“....Listen well Camus... The Tribe... and those dual katanas... I will entrust them to you.”

“Fa....ther.”

Following this, he broke his difficult expression and smiled wryly.

“Do not forget! You are my son! Therefore, you must do it without fail!”

“.....”

“Without fail.... you must become a good man.”

Tears began to overflow in Rigund’s eyes.

“Go.... everyone...I entrust them to you.”

Camus did not turn back any longer. He parted ways, desperately running with the dual katanas in his hands.

The oasis they lived in was abandoned and was considerably far from the new oasis they had found. Thus, they began to live there. Everyone waited for Rigund to return home. However, they were shocked by the new information they received from their comrades who were patrolling the area.

An existence that resembled Rigund was found. Everyone was pleased to hear that he was alive, yet, they were soon betrayed by the following words.

“A poisonous tail has grown from Rigund.”

When they investigated this, they determined that Rigund had been devoured by the Desert Tortoise. Moreover, its appearance had greatly changed. Though it still had deep purple skin, it seemed to have morphed into the appearance of Rigund with a poisonous tail and sharp nails.

Everyone who heard that fact could not hide their shock. When their companions discovered him, he seemed to have a slight bit of consciousness remaining inside of him. They had told Rigund that they had found a safe place for the tribe.

Following this, Rigund had apparently squeezed out his last ounce of strength in order to successfully limit the Desert Tortoise’s range of actions. Due to his magic, he was able to place a barrier where the Desert Tortoise could not escape from that place.

Camus and the others were unaware of how long it would last, as there were a lot of monsters to be absorbed in that place. However, they did not find what they were looking for. The robed individual.

Though, according to the report, he spoke the words ‘My Business here is done’ before disappearing. For now, it seemed that they could experience relief.

However, even if they didn’t search for monsters within the barrier, the monsters themselves would try to break out. It was possible that their instincts of survival had been stimulated by the Desert Tortoise, causing them to grow violent. Yet, Rigund said that they should just leave it alone.

Sivan examined Rigund’s story. They tried to not aim for the Desert Tortoise’s life. However, it was just not possible to ignore it for such a long period of time. They decided to think of a way to cure him.

Yet, travelers began to show up after a while. As a result, they entered the barrier of the Desert Tortoise and incurred its wrath. The Ashura Tribe on watch at that time saw that the Desert Tortoise had killed the travelers.

After that incident, they prevented people from entering the desert. Supposing they made the Desert Tortoise angry, the barrier would become ineffective. As a result, there was the possibility of it baring its fangs on them sooner.

It was for this reason that the Ashura Tribe created the role of guardian. They believed that Rigund would return to his former self once again. As such, they have continued to search for a method that would return him to normal.

# Chapter 87: Unyielding Thoughts

“Recently the barrier has had little effect. The Desert Tortoise turns violent with even the slightest stimuli. Once angered, its violence will not subside until some time has passed. Yet, if we left it alone, there is a possibility of it coming over here. Thus, those of us that can fight attempted to redirect it to another place, but...”

“There were times where it failed, leading to this result...I guess that about sums it up.”

Upon hearing Sivan’s words, Hihiro spoke as he was somehow convinced. As if the monsters were unaware of their existence, they faced the other direction. Even though the Ashura Tribe seemed to be drawing the monster’s attention, the monsters that were asleep noticed they were under attack.

“Indeed. Even though I said that there were various reasons, the most important one is that we don’t want to leave Rigund. Everyone thinks as such.”

“But if you think about the future of your brats, don’t you think this choice is wrong?”

As the man with the topknot grew irritated at Hihiro’s words, he glared at him while clenching his teeth. Appearing in front of such a man, Camus opened his mouth instead.

“Yes.....it is as you say...I believe. But...Dad is family.”

“...Then I’ll ask this. Your father was eaten by that Desert Tortoise, right? Although one of the Desert Tortoise’s characteristics is that it can take the form of your father. Even so, it just looks really similar to him. Can you really say that your father is alive?”

“That’s...”

Camus drooped his head with downcast eyes.

“Furthermore, didn’t your father say it as well? That he’d entrust the tribe to you. Yet, the one who exposed that tribe to such risks was non other than you, Chief of the Ashura Tribe .”

“What the hell would you know, bastard!?”

The man with the topknot unsheathed his shamshir<sup>72</sup> as he approached Hihiro with tremendous velocity.

“Shut up.”

As Hihiro said this, he pointed his finger tip toward the man as something flew out of it. What had shot out was, of course, a word.

The topknot man’s movements instantly froze. Not knowing what had occurred, he was startled. Even if he poured all of his strength into his body, it remained immobile. It wasn’t paralysis. It was just that his body refused to move, as if it was completely frozen.



Stop

By using Word Magic, Hiiro had robbed him of his movement. While the others had a blank expression, unsure of what Hiiro had done, Liliyn stared at him while murmuring ‘Hohou’<sup>73</sup> with interest.

Although he would not normally use Word Magic in such circumstances, Hiiro was currently in a slightly foul mood. This became quite apparent after he had listened to their story. Thus, he took such action with little concern for the potential consequences.

The reason for this may have been because he did not care about the Ashura Tribe’s current circumstances. Even Hiiro himself was frustrated as he was unsure himself.

“Oi, Nitouryuu<sup>74</sup>.”

Hiiro called out to Camus.

“Why don’t you quit it with this barren lifestyle? Unless you, no. Unless you guys can’t comprehend that the Ashura Tribe is gonna go extinct?”

“Y-You’re still saying that, bastard!?”

As it seemed that only his voice was free, the topknot man screamed. Yet Hiiro simply pointed to a certain location with his finger. Everyone shifted their gaze in that direction. What was in that direction were...collapsed children.

“Do you still not understand that you, who was entrusted with the future of the tribe, is leading it to ruin? Or can you not comprehend at all that the children are all going to die?”

As it suddenly occurred to Camus, he looked at the sleeping children, their faces distorted in pain. Within their vicinity, a person that seemed to be a mother was desperately attending to them. As she was tenderly wiping off their sweat, she tried to give them a small amount of food. However, as the children could not eat well, they rejected to drink the soup-like food.

Yet, the mother continued to give them words of encouragement, telling them to not give up. As even the mother was fatigued and was deprived of sleep, the atmosphere was clearly heartbreaking. Yet she continued to desperately smile in front of the children.

“If he saw you right now, what would your father think?”

“...”

“If it was me, I would say this. It was definitely a mistake to entrust the tribe to you.”

“Ku—...”

Camus’s expressionless face had distorted due to vexation. As the topknot man heard the children cry painfully, he could only remain silent. Liliyn called out to Hiiro in admiration.

“I’m surprised, Kozou. I would never have thought that you’d be worried about brats that are complete strangers.”

“Fun, that’s not it at all. I’m just annoyed. Annoyed at the degree of these guys’ poverty.”

“Kukuku, don’t say that, Kozou. Now then, that’s what my companion says. What do you think, Sivan?”

Liliyn raised a question to her old friend, Sivan. In doing so, he groaned as if it was difficult to say. He began to open his heavy mouth.

“...No, it is exactly as that young one has said. Yes, we may certainly be poor. However, this is something that everyone desires. This decision was not Camus’s alone.”

“In that case, the entire Ashura Tribe is a bunch of fools.”

“I-I will no longer forgive you~~!”

As the one-minute time limit of the Stop word’s effect had passed, the topknot man began to move, once again pouncing onto Hihiro with his shamshir in hand. However—

“...What are you trying to do, Chief!?”

As Camus inserted himself between Hihiro and the topknot man, his attack was interrupted. Hihiro was also suspicious of Camus’s actions as he stared at him.

“The tribe...do not insult them.”

Although it sounded like he spoke indifferently, Camus clearly wore a grim expression. Even though Hihiro’s words were irrefutably sound and logical, even Camus had things that he would not yield to. He displayed his intention that he would not allow his comrades to be mocked.

“You can do whatever you want, but those that purposely take actions that will lead themselves to ruin, there is nothing more foolish than such people. Even if you guys claim to have your reasons for doing such things, I can only see it as absolutely ridiculous.”

“I will not...allow you to say more.”

His hands turned toward his back, pulling out a pair of katanas.

“So you want to have a go? How about redirecting that enthusiasm to subduing monsters?”

“...Shut up.”

“I guess I’ll just say it then? You guys simply don’t want to fight that monster.”

“Shut up.”

“Because its appearance is similar to your father...the original chief. That’s why you’re just hesitating.”

“Shut up...”

“Thinking that he will eventually be restored, that the chief will come back. While relying on such unfounded wishful thinking, you’ve been avoiding fights while pointlessly getting yourselves hurt.”

“I’m telling you to...shut up.”

“You guys are laying waste to the intentions of those that have put their lives on the line.”

“Shut the fuck up!”

Disappearing instantly from that spot, Camus suddenly appeared in front of Hiiro’s eyes before he noticed. Holding a katana in each hand, Camus held them in a cross as he tried to slash Hiiro.

*Kiiiiiiiiin<sup>75</sup>!*

Hiiro once again tried to parry the attack, unsheathing his Thorn Sword Piercer as he met Camus’s blades.

*(Ku—.....what power! Although I was able to defend against it cause I saw it beforehand, this guy’s way too fast!?)*

Even though Hiiro was able to read his angered opponent’s simplistic attack, he had barely managed to defend against it. The only reason for this was that was just how swift Camus’s movements were.

“Wait, Camus.”

Upon hearing those words, Camus created distance between him and Hiiro. Following this, he looked toward the owner of the voice, Sivan.

“Camus, are those the actions of a chief?”

“.....I will not...let you be insulted.”

Seeing Camus vexingly gritting his teeth as he answered, Sivan could only spit out a deep sigh.

“.....It cannot be helped. They are guests.”

“What?”

“You will not revise your thoughts, yes?”

“Of course.”

“Fumu. Camus is the same, no?”

“Un.”

Sivan once again spat out a sigh as he shrugged his shoulders.

“In which case, it’d be better if you went at it until you’re satisfied. However, let’s step outside.”

“That’s fine with me.”

“...I will win.”

Hiiro and Camus glared at each other. Yet, Jin-u made an appalled expression as he cried out.

“Sivan-sama, is this acceptable!?”

“It cannot be helped. Not to mention, in times of dispute, it is better for them to clash with each other.”

“B-But...”

“There are some things that can only be learned by colliding with fists. Is that not so, Liliyn?”

“Fun, more importantly, if you’re gonna do it then do it already.”

Liliyn could not help but smirk as she was looking forward to it. Undoubtedly, she was happy that she could observe Hiiro’s battle. Looking at her, Sivan could only shake his head in grief.

“Jin-u, you’ll be the judge.”

“Y-Yes!”

As the topknot man, Jin-u, gave his reply, he brought the two with him as they walked toward the desert.

Sivan spoke to Liliyn who was nearby.

“That young one is just like you. Holding on to his own ideas and carrying them out, not to mention his brazen attitude. He wouldn’t happen to be your child, would he?”

“Hohou, that’s quite a funny joke. It seems as if you want the remaining years of your short life to be scattered right here, yes?”

As she unpleasantly scowled, Liliyn’s thirst for blood strengthened. Sivan began to fret.

“It’s a joke!”

“Fun, exactly how am I similar to that kozou?”

“I-Is that so...”

As sweat unpleasantly flowed down his forehead, Sivan spat out a sigh.

“Now that you mention it, even that Ashura kozou resembled you when you were young. That honesty and straight-forwardness. Even the way that you both cherish your comrades is idiotic.”

“Hoh hoh hoh, well, he is still immature.”

“Certainly, I’ve heard that those of the Ashura Tribe require 40 years before they become an adult. I see. So he’s basically still a brat.”

When those of the Ashura Tribe reached the age of 40, their appearances become the figure of humans in their twenties. Even though Camus had been alive for more than 3 decades, his appearance and mentality were still immature.

“Seeing as you have the figure of a brat, I don’t think you’re qualified to say that, though?”

“Shut up! As if you can say that when you can’t see, you fucking straight-laced old man<sup>76</sup>!”

“Like I’ve said countless times, even if I don’t see it, I can still feel it. You lolibaba bastard<sup>77</sup>.”

As the two glared at each other with sparks flying through the air, Silva was simply amazed. Shamoe could only watch them as she was constantly flustered.

# Chapter 88: Camus's True Power

Hiiro and Camus stood atop the desert after leaving the oasis with Jin-u's guidance. Wondering what was going on, those of the Ashura Tribe came to observe. Among said observers were kids.

The children were, of course, cheering for Camus. As for Hiiro— "Good luck, my comrade!"

"D-Do your best! Hiiro-sama!"

Silva and Shamoe cheered for him, yet he twitched at Silva's support.

*(Who the hell is your comrade....?)* Of course, Hiiro understood that he meant the comrade of Liliyn's fan club. If he hit Silva, he would only rejoice. So Hiiro decided to ignore him.

*(Well then. More importantly, how should I fight... For now...)* As he thought so, Hiiro used the word Pry . Of course, the others noticed that Hiiro used his magic. Jin-u raised his guard.

"What are you doing, bastard?"

Although Jin-u had asked him so, Hiiro just pretended not to know anything.

"I'm just doing some stretching. Magic is allowed in this fight, right?"

"O-Oh...."

Camus was very suspicious of Hiiro, but Hiiro ignored him.

CAMUS	Lv. 85
HP: 2380/2400 MP: 3270/3270  EXP: 674441 NEXT: 27911	ATK: 588668 DEF: 490515 AGL: 800823 HIT: 450470 INT: 388
Magic Attribute Earth  Magic Sand Needle Earth, Attack, Sand Wave Earth, Attack, Sand Armor Earth, Support, Sand Guard Earth, Support, Desert Storm Earth, Attack, Red Idol Earth  Titles Ashura Tribe, One Who Lives With the Desert, Monster Slayer, Sage, Easy-going, Dual Katana User Red Sand, Chief of the Ashura Tribe, One Who Inherits His Father's Will, Lightning Speed <sup>78</sup>	

Hiiro was surprised for a bit that Camus was at level 85. However, Camus did not possess long-range attacks of the superhuman class like Liliyn. There was something that was interesting in his parameters

though.

*(As expected, speed is essential...)* Furthermore, Camus was not even serious, yet he was able to see Liliyn's movements. That alone was already troublesome. Compared to Hihiro's level of 76, there was a clear difference in speed. There was a difference of over 200 points. Honestly, he was not someone that Hihiro could beat.

Though his attacks were not so strong, his agility was high. As he obtained the Lightning Speed title, that alone already explained quite a lot. Although Hihiro has already amassed quite a number of spells, Camus's magic had an advantage over the earth. Hihiro wore a wry smile.

*(Fighting with an earth mage in the desert's gonna be a pain, huh...)* Everything here could be his weapon. Hihiro made sure not to forget that distance didn't matter here. Camus would probably have a way to control the sand.

Hihiro thought that this was gonna be a tough fight. For now, he prepared himself by erasing the Magic Words he set on Mikazuki.

Hihiro could only set a maximum of 5 words. It was important to set them before the fight began. Liliyn stared in his direction with a face full of intrigue. It couldn't be helped if she was interested.

For now, the priority was to win this fight. Hihiro set Word Magic on his arms. Then, something suddenly occurred to him.

*(Maybe, I can use this desert...)* "We'll start soon."

Jin-u appeared in front of the two as they both nodded. Camus seemed prepared. He unsheathed his twin blades as he took a defensive stance.

Watching those two, Liliyn and Sivan exchanged opinions.

"Which one do you think's gonna win?"

"Who knows? Their power is quite similar."

"Then, Camus who has the geographical advantage will be superior."

"I wonder about that."

"Mu?"

"Certainly, he looks no more than an arrogant Imp."

"Isn't that obvious?"

Probably, this sentiment was shared by everyone as well.

"But, he's...interesting."

"Hoh, that's rare. Wait, no. There's no way you would bring normal people. Are you saying that there's something special about that youngster?"

Liliyn simply grinned.

“See it for yourself.”

“Mu...”

“Even if everyone believes that kozou is at a disadvantage, when the fight starts, you will be surprised.”

Seeing her laugh, Sivan sharpened his sense in order to feel the ‘surprise’ she talked about.

Hihiro unsheathed his sword as the two glared at each other.

“I...will...correct you... My family...are not...idiots...”

“I don’t care about that.”

“Eh ?”

“Right now, we’re determining which one is stronger...right? If you want to deny it, then prove me wrong, Nitouryuu.”

“You...will regret it...”

“Sure you will.”

“Guh... You will.”

“I will not.”

“You will definitely...”

“There’s no reason to.”

“There is....”

“Ahem!”

Jin-u cleared his throat to stop them from bickering.

“Listen. The fight will be decided when one side gets knocked out or surrenders. Any objections?”

““None.””

The two answered in harmony. Jin-u nodded as he took a deep breath. Everyone gulped. The fight with their honor at stake would begin. The winner proved their statement right. The loser would have to bitterly accept. Staking that, they would fight. And then, to start the fight...

“Begin!”



# Chapter 89: Hiiro vs. Camus

The first one to move was Hiiro. As he was able to predict his opponent's attacks to some extent, Hiiro acted in order to obtain the first move.

As Hiiro's right hand was already holding onto his *Thorn Sword Piercer*, he had instantly reduced the time required to attack. However, Camus had clearly captured Hiiro's movements in his field of view. Although he had acted slower than Hiiro, as he held his katana in a similar fashion, Camus gripped it with great force as he had also instantly drawn his weapon.

*Kiiiiiiiin!*

As the two blades clashed, sparks began to fly. However, the colliding swords were only one on each side. Camus still had a single sword left in his other hand. While maintaining the blade deadlock, Camus moved in an attempt to pierce Hiiro with his other sword.

As Hiiro had predicted this attack, he immediately jumped back as he took some distance from his opponent. Following this, Hiiro promptly applied force onto his foot in attempt to strike again. However, his right foot became buried in the sand with a *zubo*.

“Tch—!”

A battle atop unfamiliar sand, as opposed to one on firm ground, was far more difficult than Hiiro had anticipated. Should his application of force be improper, his foot would be consumed by the sand.

“The sand is...alive.”

As Camus faintly spoke, this time it was he who had instantaneously moved from that spot. However, unlike Hiiro, there was no wasted movement. His speed was so great, it would make one forget that they were not fighting on top of sand.

As Camus was approaching Hiiro's chest, he instantly held up his sword in order to defend against the attack. However, Camus swung both swords with brute force. Although Hiiro had successfully deflected the attack, whether it was caused by his lack of a good foothold or his inability to take the full brunt of the attack, Hiiro was sent flying, rolling across the ground.

Hiiro immediately got up and faced forward, yet Camus was no longer there. All he could see was a shadow swiftly approaching him.

*(What in the hell...above!?)*

Sure enough, Camus had jumped up into the sky, falling towards Hiiro while trying to pierce him with his katana. He applied great force into his foot in an attempt to move away from his current location, yet he once again felt his feet become buried in the sand.

*(Damn! It's difficult to move!)*

At this rate, I'll be skewered, or so Hihiro thought. As he had no choice, Hihiro activated one of the previously set words, *Protect* . Immediately, a pale magic wall was born, covering Hihiro.

*Bashin*<sup>79</sup>—!

As Camus's katana was deflected by the wall, his body was blown away, as if it was repelled. While shocked, Camus rotated his body round and round while in midair before making a superb landing.

“J-just now...!?”

“Kukuku.”

As Sivan was startled by Hihiro's method of defense, Liliyn let out a beaming smile. The two's responses contrasted greatly.<sup>80</sup>

“Was that magic just now? No, there were no signs of any magical attribute...in which case...”

Sivan recalled that Jin-u perceived something that seemed to be magic. As he remembered, he realized that even at that time, there was no presence of any sort of magical attribute.

“In other words, it has no attribute...right?”

“Kuku, as expected, you noticed it Sivan.”

“I knew that you wouldn't go on a journey with just any ordinary fellow. Even so, to think you'd be traveling with a Unique Magic user is quite a shock.”

“The fun part has still yet to come.”

Although he raised his eyebrows in reaction to Liliyn's suggestive words, as she was unlikely to answer any more questions due to the current atmosphere, Sivan simply decided to look ahead.

Camus glared at the pale barrier covering Hihiro with a dubious look. As he was confused at his own attack being so outrightly deflected, Camus took some distance.

*(Fuu, that was dangerous. This fight is more difficult than I had anticipated. To think I'd be made to use the word *Protect* so soon.)* Although he was able to prevent incoming attacks for one minute, as he was also unable to participate in close combat, it was a risk. The defensive wall repelled any opponents that got close to it. Well, if his purpose was to perform a body blow, then it would be sufficient.

*(There doesn't seem to be too much damage...)*

However, there were many things one could do within the time limit of one minute. Hihiro concentrated magic in his fingertip in an attempt to write words. Noticing these actions, Camus's eyebrows twitched as he grew wary.

“What you are trying to do.....I won't let you.”

As he returned his twin katanas into their sheaths, Camus held his hand towards the ground.

“Sand Needle.”

In doing so, the sand near his feet began to form multiple needles, all aimed at Hiiro. If one were to take such an attack directly, it would be no different than trying to hug a huge cactus.

*(As I thought, he’s an earth, no, a sand user...)* However, Hiiro did not move. The reason for this being — *Bashin Bashin Bashiiiiin!*

As the effect of the Protect word was still fresh and strong, Hiiro used it to protect his body from the onslaught of sand needles. As the approaching needles returned to their original smoothness, they simply dispersed.

“Nn...hard.”

As Camus viewed the scene, he voiced his impressions as if he were muttering.

“Then how about...this.”

Camus made an underarm throw, moving his right arm with large movements. It looked as if he were trying to scoop something up. As he did so, the sand in front of him bulged upward, hanging high in the air as if it were a tsunami attempting to assault Hiiro.

“.....Sand Wave.”

*(Indeed, this is beyond him just having the geographical advantage.)* As the waves of sand came pouring down before his eyes, Hiiro turned toward the tsunami and started running towards it.

Camus watched on behind the wave as he was convinced that it would inflict a large amount of damage. However, at this time, a hole in the shape of a circle burst out of the central portion of the sand wave. Hiiro jumped out of said hole.

“Wha—!?”

As Camus had not expected Hiiro to avoid the wave of sand, much less penetrate it, he was stunned.

“5, 4, 3, 2...one minute.”

As he said so, the defensive wall that enveloped Hiiro began to disappear. As he had counted to a minute after the activation time, even though it disappeared, Hiiro was unperturbed. Rather, Hiiro used the time limit to repel his opponent’s attack while approaching him, causing Camus to grow agitated.

While he poised his Thorn Sword Piercer, Hiiro rushed forward, unleashing a thrust. As the defensive wall had disappeared, Hiiro was now capable of attacking.

“Gotcha!”

Hiiro launched an attack that seemed as if it would penetrate Camus’s lowered guard. However, at that time— *Shun*<sup>81</sup>—!

Hiiro's katana was completely unable to penetrate its designated target. What it had pierced through was simply air.

*(It failed—!? Where'd he go?)*

In that instant, sand began to dance in midair with a *parapara*<sup>82</sup>. As it appeared in Hiiro's line of sight, he looked up, thinking that his opponent had jumped up in the air. However, his eyes saw no one.

“...Eh?”

As he felt a chill run down his spine, Hiiro detected a presence behind him.

“Above...you thought I jumped?”

This time, it was Hiiro who was caught completely off guard.

*(Shit!)*

Immediately activating the previously installed word, Speed, he escaped from his current location. As he jumped without concern for his posture, Hiiro tumbled to the ground, rolling around with a *gorogoro*<sup>83</sup>.

However, as he had avoided Camus's sword strike from behind, Hiiro deemed it to be a satisfactory result.

“.....Suddenly...got faster?”

As Hiiro's speed became equivalent to his own, Camus was startled. Not understanding how his speed had suddenly increased, Camus was wary as to not approach Hiiro carelessly.

As Hiiro was Hiiro, thinking that he might have been slashed caused unpleasant perspiration to form on his back.

*(Fuu, that was pretty dangerous just now, huh. However, that bastard...)* Hiiro wondered why Camus wasn't above him when he had thought he had taken to skies. Hiiro reasoned that Camus had probably bent down quickly, thrown sand toward the sky and jumped toward the side all at the same time.

As Hiiro saw the sand soaring into the sky, he presumed that it was the sand produced from Camus's soles when he jumped. However, it was a ploy derived by Camus in order to make Hiiro lower his guard.

“Seems that you've got a pretty sharp brain, Nitouryuu.”

“If I can use sand.....I am strong.”

While tensing his chest, Camus boasted. However, it was as he had indicated. As Hiiro had faced many predicaments because of it, he could only tense his body.

*(Guess it's about time for me to start, huh.....)* Thinking this, Hiiro returned his katana to its scabbard, gathering magic into his fingertip as he began to write words. Following this, he fired them straight into his feet.

*(That's number two.....next is.....)*

Once again, Hihiro began to write words. This time, however, Hihiro pointed his finger toward Camus.

“...?”

Camus, alerted by Hihiro's actions, became defensive. Following which, Hihiro leaped, moving to an area just above Camus. And then— “Take this!”

Hihiro unleashed the word onto Camus.

*(This is.....what he used on Jin-u?)*

Camus remembered his comrade Jin-u having his movements stopped by Hihiro's strange attack. Therefore, as he thought that he must absolutely not allow himself to get hit by it, Camus jumped backward from his spot. The words stuck onto the spot where Camus was at previously.

Seeing this, Hihiro clicked his tongue audibly enough for Camus to hear as he descended onto the ground.

“You're not bad. It doesn't seem like you'll be hit by that.”

“Nn.....a little while ago, Jin-u.....had trouble.”

“Fun. Guess that means you're not an idiot.”

Following this, Camus sheathed his katana as he narrowed his eyes.

“Next...interesting thing...I'll show you.”

“Nn?”

Camus placed his right hand on the ground.

“.....Sand Armor — Type — Gauntlet.”

Following this, the sand moved, enveloping Camus's right hand. Camus was now wearing a gauntlet made of extremely hardened sand. As it was only his right hand that had become armed, it was swollen several times, to the point that it looked uncomfortable. It was as if the hand belonged to a golem or giant.

“.....Sand Needle.”

“Tch—!!”

Spikes of sand started flying towards Hihiro. Hihiro immediately jumped to the side. However, Camus suddenly headed toward him in that direction. It seemed that Hihiro had moved accordingly to Camus's speculations.

“Shi—...!?”

“...This is the end!”

*Dogan*<sup>84</sup>—!

“Gah—!?”

Hiiro was sent splendidly flying by the fist armed with sand. He received an impact that seemed to instantly blow his consciousness away. Bright red blood spewed out of his mouth. As if he were a stone skipping on water, Hiiro bounced up and down before hitting a big sand pile.

*Dogaan—!*

“Gaha—!”

As he fell to the ground, a large amount of sand came raining down from above. Seeing that, Camus made a slight guts pose. The children started bouncing around in delight as they shared the same sentiment.

Liliyn faced the direction in which Hiiro was launched, wearing a sulky expression as she simply stared. Seeing such an expression, Sivan began to unleash words with a smile.

“Hoh hoh hoh. It looks like the match has been decided.”

Presumably due to the fact that his friend had won, Sivan spoke his feelings with joy.

“Feeeeee<sup>85</sup>~~! Hiiro-samaa!”

As Shamoe’s entire body trembled, she worried about Hiiro’s well-being. Yet, Silva and Liliyn simply stared in the direction that Hiiro had flown off in.

“Ojou-sama.”

“Aah, that bastard’s trying to do something.”

“Nn? Did you say something?”

Sivan asked thus.

“Aah, the fun part’s coming up so look carefully.”

“.....Ha? The match is already—”

“You’ve aged, Sivan. His fighting spirit has yet to waver. Rather...”

*Dogon—!*

As the mound of sand vigorously burst apart, Hiiro appeared with ragged breathing, his face distorted in pain.

“There, see? Although it was unlikely for him to give up against an attack of that degree, it’s good to see that he’s still plenty motivated.”

“Impossible...he received Camus’s blow head-on...”

“He instantly jumped back and escaped the full brunt of the attack. Even so, it looks like he received quite a considerable amount of damage. Kukuku.”

After heaving a large sigh, Liliyn stared at Hihiro, who had reestablished his breathing.

*(Now, show it to me. Show me what you were trying to do just then.)*

# Chapter 90: The Conclusion

Camus thought that he had finished off Hiiro. However, it seemed that his attacks were too shallow. In which case, he would just attack again. However, this time, he would make sure he would get a direct hit. That was what Camus thought while staring at Hiiro.

Yet, seeing Hiiro's eyes, Camus changed his mind. There was a thirst for blood dwelling within Hiiro's eyes. Camus assumed that Hiiro wouldn't fall for the same attack twice. Hiiro's eyes conveyed that if Camus were to approach him, Hiiro would make him regret it. It was true that, as long as Camus had not confirmed the identity of Hiiro's magic, it would be dangerous to focus on close-quarters combat.

“Approaching....dangerous? Then, with my sand...I will finish it!”

The sand on Camus's right hand scattered as it fell onto the ground. After seeing that Camus had no intention of approaching him, Hiiro faintly smiled.

*(It was effective...however, I have also made my preparations as well. This time, I will let you taste my true power.)*

He wrote Speed twice, activating them consecutively in order to create a synergetic effect.

Hiiro flew straight toward Camus. However, Camus pressed his hand onto the ground.

“How bold.... Here I go.”

Camus discharged his magic power. He intended to use the same magic, yet it seemed like the situation didn't turn out as he had expected.

“...Eh?”

*Shi~n!*

The sand wouldn't listen to him. There was no response at all. Then, he suddenly felt something odd with the sand underneath his feet.

*(The sand...is hard?)*

He touched the sand with the tip of his toes in order to confirm it. As expected, he could feel that the sand had become harder than he had expected. It was similar to the dirt found on normal ground. As Camus was bewildered by the sudden change in the sand, Hiiro had already approached him.

*Dosu!*

“Kaha—!?”

Using the momentum from the rush, Hiiro punched Camus in the stomach. Camus let out a big breath due to



the sudden attack he received.

“Confirm your footing clearly, Nitoryuu?”

“Gu....?”

While holding his belly, Camus attempted to leave that place immediately. However, Hihiro pursued him as he tried to land the final blow.

*(Ku—...compared to before...it's faster!?)*

Camus was reduced into a state of panic. This frenzy was caused not only by Hihiro's abnormal speed boost, but because Camus was no longer able to use his sand for his magic.

*Baki—!*

This time, it was Camus who got blown away by Hihiro's punch to his face. He tried to rotate his body in order to safely descend. However, the moment Camus landed, in front of him was Hihiro's fist.

*Dogo—!*

Upon receiving another blow to his stomach, Camus once again released a large breath.

*(Why...is he..so fast?)*

Seeing Hihiro's sudden change, Camus grinded his teeth as he thought Hihiro was going easy on him until now. He thought, at this rate, he was going to get beaten up as much as Hihiro desired. For now, he needed to place a large distance between them first.

After he escaped, Camus took out his katanas as the pain in his stomach distorted his face. However, in the very next moment, the blade was pulled by something.

“—!?”

The source of the pull was coming from the ground below. However, there was nothing there but the sand on the ground. Camus thought the reason the katana fell into the ground was because he hadn't gripped it strongly enough. Camus hurridley tried to pull it out of the sand, however, it seemed that its weight increased considerably.

“You sure it's alright to look away?”

When Camus quickly turned his head, Hihiro's kick imminently approached. Then—

*Doga—!*

“Gaha—!?”

Being kicked in the face, Camus was launched off into the distance. He tumbled across the sand, just like Hihiro had before. Blood flowed from his mouth. He was unable to stand straight. Hihiro faintly smiled as he spoke say..

“I told you, right? Watch your footing.”

“...—Eh?”

In the next instant—

*Bushubushubushu—!*

“T-That’s...this is... My...?”

Numerous sand needles appeared from under Camus’s feet. Camus realized that it was just like the magic he had used before. While he was trying to figure out how Hiiro was capable of using it, Camus received several wounds on his body.

One sand needle directed itself at Camus’s neck. It didn’t stop at his neck, rather it was stopped from reaching his neck. Were it to continue its path, Camus would have undoubtedly died.

Camus stood shocked as he had no idea what was even going on anymore. He had already sustained countless wounds on his body. He did not have his katanas. Furthermore, due to the last attack, he no longer had any strength left.

“It’s...my defeat...”

Not only Camus, but everyone who observed the fight was shocked by the results, their mouths gaping wide open. It was as if time had stopped. Following this, Hiiro spoke softly...

“It’s.....my win.”

In that moment, the match had truly reached a conclusion.

*(Fuuh. Seems like it went well...)*

This time, the fight proceeded as Hiiro had planned.

First, Hiiro would confirm how Camus would use the sand. In doing so, his primary objective would be to analyze precisely how Camus would react. That was why Hiiro confronted Camus’s katanas with his own. He wanted to understand Camus’s movements and thoughts.

Following this, as Hiiro couldn’t simply allow himself to receive Camus’s magic head-on, he planned on using the word `Protect` in order to grasp the magic’s casting intervals and special characteristics. However, since the footing was worse than he expected, Hiiro was unexpectedly forced to use the `Protect` word earlier.

As Hiiro had somehow succeeded in agitating Camus enough to make him use his magic, using the word `Protect` to defend, Hiiro was able to identify a flaw in Camus’s magic while successfully lowering his guard. It was at this time when Camus used his magic tsunami<sup>86</sup>.

At that time, Hiiro wrote a word and shot it below Camus’s feet. As it was an prepared word, it disappeared, absorbed by the ground. Hiiro then cut through the tsunami and rushed toward Camus. However, to Hiiro’s genuine surprise, Camus avoided his attack.

Even though Hiiro attacked from an opening in Camus’s defenses, Camus managed to avoid it. Hiiro then

wrote another word and, once again, shot it under Camus's feet. This was the second set word.

Afterward, Hihiro wrote another word and jumped right above Camus. The word was aimed and shot at Camus. However, he managed to avoid it as the words disappeared into the ground once again. This was the third and final word set. In actuality, Hihiro clicked his tongue in order to prevent Camus from realizing what he was doing. Hihiro thought that if he appeared to be frustrated due to the fact that he missed, Camus would lower his guard.

At that moment, Hihiro thought that everything was in order. He didn't expect Camus to counterattack. Receiving an attack from the Sand Armor, Hihiro was almost rendered unconscious. He swore to pay him back in full.

The next phase of the plan depended on timing. Yet, by some luck, Camus decided to use a long-range attack after looking into Hihiro's eyes. It seemed that Hihiro's act of pouring the feelings of 'do not come closer' into his eyes was effective. In addition, Hihiro could only grin as he saw the place where Camus was standing. The reason for this was because that was the spot where Hihiro had placed the trap.

He immediately activated one of the set words, *Solid*. The sand suddenly hardened. It seemed that Camus wanted to use his best move, yet the sand would not respond to him.

The reason for this was because the sand around Camus was no longer the sand he was familiar with. It was essential to be able to form an image when using magic. It seemed that Camus's magic allowed him to control the sand freely. However, as he could not imagine how to control sand as solid as concrete, Camus's magic misfired.

Magic was the process to completely understand and execute a phenomenon. However, Camus was unable to understand the state of the sand at that time. As a result, he was unable to move the sand. Of course, it was still sand. If Camus understood its true nature, he might have been able to move it.

However, as Camus still had some MP remaining, he was confused as to why his magic misfired. Since he couldn't calm down and analyze the situation, he was rendered unable to manipulate the sand.

Given this chance, Hihiro intended to pay Camus back for the attack he received a while ago. He used two *Speed* words to create a synergetic effect and rush in to punch Camus in his abdomen.

Of course, Camus definitely attempted to escape. However, Hihiro attacked Camus in order to corner him into the place that Hihiro had prepared earlier before he launched another attack. When he escaped to that place, Camus could feel something unnatural happening to his katanas. Because of that, the katanas fell to the ground.

That was to be expected, for Hihiro had used the word *Magnetic*. Camus felt that his katanas were being sucked into the ground. If it was the normal Camus, he wouldn't have dropped them. However, as he had taken damage, his strength was depleted. Being unable to maintain a strong grip on the katanas, Camus helplessly lost against the magnetic force. As expected, he managed to deprive Camus of his katanas.

Then, in order to deliver the final blow, Hihiro attacked him once more. Of course, Camus was launched to the place Hihiro wanted.

This time, the word Needle was invoked. The reason Hihiro wanted to use this was because Camus was a practitioner of sand magic. Hihiro wanted to harass Camus by casting a spell identical to his own. Hihiro judged that it would reduce Camus's fighting spirit. As a result, it had somehow turned out well. Hihiro had won. All according to plan.

# Chapter 91: Camus's Resolve

“Well...”

Jin-u, the observer, stared at the situation with his eyes wide open in surprise. He turned his head slowly toward Hiiro.

“Oi, it’s over.”

“N-No way... Chief...”

“Are you listening?”

“Chief...”

He didn’t seem to be listening at all.

“...Huh, guess I’ve no choice.”

Hiiro shrugged as he sheathed his sword. He then slowly moved toward Camus. The sand needles that surrounded Camus faded back into the ground. Camus, who seemed to be supported by the needles, collapsed onto his knees.

“Oi.”

“.....”

Camus lifted his face and made eye contact with Hiiro. His face was expressionless as usual, yet, his eyes were clouded with tears. It was certain that he was still mortified by his loss.

“Disappointed?”

“...Mortified.”

“Well, that’s because I’m strong.”

“I’m...also strong.”

“Even so, you lost to me.”

“I...I wasn’t serious yet.”

“Even so. The one who lost this battle was you.”

“.....”

Hiiro picked up the pair of katanas nearby and tossed them back to Camus.

“You said it before, right? You’ll protect your tribe.”

“.....Un...”

“That includes all of the children that adore you as well, right?”

“Of course.”

“But if you keep going like this, they’ll die in the near future.”

“N-No way! I’ll protect them!”

“Even though you lost to me?”

“That...That’s because...that...”

Unable to come up with a reasonable excuse, Camus lowered his head.

“You’re not protecting them.”

“...Eh?”

“Even if you say you’re protecting them, all you are doing is putting them in danger.”

“...Then what should I...do?”

“Don’t be naive. Think for yourself.”

“...”

As Camus responded while wearing a depressed expression, Hihiro could not stand seeing him in such a state. He began to involuntarily speak what was on his mind.

“If it were me...I would eliminate any and all obstacles standing in my way.”

“Eliminate...obstacles? All of them?”

Camus looked at Hihiro with a startled expression.

“Aa, all of them. I’m a greedy person. I’ll take what I want and I won’t give it to anyone. Therefore, I won’t let anyone take anything away from me. By doing this, I will protect everything.”

Hihiro and Camus looked at each other. The silence between them lasted for a moment. Then, unlike before, Camus’s eyes lit up with life.

“.....Name, can you tell it to me?”

“.....Hihiro. Hihiro Okamura.”

“Hihiro...Hihiro...it’s Hihiro. Un...I’ll remember it.”

Camus looked at Hihiro with a sincere expression.

“I’m...Camus.”

“I know. But you’ll be called Nitouryuu.”

“Muh... Call me Camus.”

“I refuse. If you want to be called that, then make me recognize you.”

“Recognize...?”

At that moment, two children from the crowd ran toward the two.

“Camus Camus~!”

“Are you okay?”

“Kora~. Your next opponent is me!”

The children, wanting to protect Camus, stood between the two as they glared at Hiiro with animosity.

“Chief, are you okay?”

“Un. You guys...should stop.”

Camus scolded the children.

“Eh, but, but—!”

“That’s right. He bullied Camus Camus!”

“Uun. It’s fine...Hiiro is...a guest.”

The children looked at Camus with a blank expression “Nh? Is that so?”

“If Camus Camus says so, then...”

“I-I guess so...”

The children seem to reluctantly accept Camus’s response. However, one of the children still glared at Hiiro as they spoke.

“G-Got it!? Camus Camus said it’s okay, but don’t get cocky.”

“Shut up, brat!”

As Hiiro returned the glare, the children cried ‘Hyi!’<sup>87</sup> before hiding behind Camus.

“It seems like we’ve finally arrived at a conclusion.”

As Sivan spoke, Liliyn also reacted.

“But, as expected of the Red Rose . To find someone like that. I wasn’t expecting Camus to lose.”

“Hmph. I told you before, right? That you’ll be able to see something interesting.”

“Hoh hoh hoh, that seems to be the case, huh.”

Sivan turned to face Hiiro as he spoke.

“That aside, ever since I met him, I’ve felt something strange coming from him. Who exactly is he?”

“I have no obligation to tell you.”

“I also...want to know.”

Camus, whose eyes sparkled, *Kirakira*, with child-like curiosity, had unknowingly appeared beside her, surprising the two.

“About Hiiro...can...you tell me?”

“...I refuse. I’ll think about it when you are also recognized by me.”

Camus lowered his eyebrows regretfully. However, he made a declaration.

“Nn...I’ll make sure to hear it someday.”

It seemed that Camus had decided on something. However, Hiiro simply looked at Camus with an amazed expression as he let out a sigh. Liliyn then slipped closer to Hiiro and spoke in a small voice, similar to a whisper.

“As expected, you really are interesting.”

“...I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

This time, although Hiiro was annoyed by the fact that he had to improvise throughout the fight, he had inadvertently allowed Liliyn to see him use his magic several times as a result. Knowing her, she was most likely able to grasp the characteristics of Hiiro’s *Word Magic* .

*(Well, she doesn’t seem like someone that would reveal someone else’s secrets. Although it’s irritating having her watch me all the time, I guess I can let it go.)* With that decided, everyone returned to the oasis.

“Hi-H-H-H-Hihiro-sama! I am so glad you are safe!”

“Nofofofofo! As expected from Hihiro-sama! I believed in you, nofofofofo!”

As he thought they were too noisy, Hiiro looked at Shamoe and Silva who were making a ruckus. Hiiro wanted to relax and rest near the bank of the lake when he returned to the oasis, yet the impression of the last battle was so vivid in the mind of the two that they began to ramble about it.

“Shamoe...Shamoe...when you were sent flying, Shamoe’s heart almost stopped!”

“Nofofofofo! When that happened, I too almost forgot to breathe!”

“It would have been great if you died like that, though.”



“So harsh! Those words are too severe, Ojou-sama! Nofofofofo!”

Hiiro thought that it was excessively noisy as he covered his ears. Thinking that he’d have to deal with these three throughout his journey, Hiiro began to feel a queasy sensation in the pit of his stomach as he sighed, exasperated.

“Hiiro...for a little bit...can I talk to you?”

Camus approach Hiiro alone.

“What is it?”

“I’ve...decided.”

“...Decided what?”

“I will...also protect.”

“Protect what?”

“Everything. I’m also...greedy.”

Listening to the response, Hiiro involuntarily grinned.

“Have you told this to anyone else?”

“I told Jii-chan. Jii-chan said...charge forward with...what I want to do.”

“I see.”

Hiiro looked at Camus’s face. He was clearly older than Hiiro, yet, in Hiiro’s eyes, he was still immature. No one would believe that a juvenile like Camus would be the chief of a tribe.

However, in reality, Camus currently held the fate of his tribe within his hands. Such a person had now made a decision. In addition, the cause of that decision was undoubtedly himself. This was something that both Hiiro and Camus understood clearly.

“...Then, are you going to do it?”

“Un....I...we will...defeat the monster of the desert.”

Indeed, it was something that they had agreed on. Protecting everyone. There was a monster in the desert that could attack at any time. When it attacked, they would fight to escape and then find somewhere safe to reside in for a period of time. This was one way to protect his tribe. However, there was always the chance that someone might get injured or killed during the monster’s assault. It was also clear that hiding in the shadows of the monster would do nothing but hurt their pride and limit their possibilities.

In order to truly protect them, there was no choice but to eliminate the threat. If they couldn’t leave the desert yet still wanted to live in peace, then they had to get rid of a potential catastrophe.

That was the decision that Camus made in order to protect the children’s future. However, there was clearly some danger involved. Their opponent was a monster that absorbed the powers of the previous

chief. Everyone was wary of the power that the previous chief possessed. If the Ashura group had participated in the battle, even with some risk, they might have been able to defeat it.

However, Camus, before today, was unwilling to take that risk as he would have to face a monster that resembled his father. But today, he had arrived at a decision. In order to protect the future of the tribe, he had to defeat that monster. Even though the monster looked liked him, it was not his father. Camus realized that the monster was a monster. He realized that through Hiiro. In order to protect the tribe, he needed to move forward. As he was told thus, he made this decision.

That aside, there was clearly a huge risk. Camus knew that if everyone fought the monster, then they would be able to defeat it somehow. However, there was a high chance that someone would get hurt or killed in the battle. Because of this, he faced Hiiro and spoke.

“Hiiro...lend me your strength.”

# Chapter 92: United Front

Camus looked at Hihiro. Honestly speaking, Hihiro had a hunch it might have turned out like this after Camus had found the determination to take action. However, Hihiro closed his eyes and spoke.

“I have no obligation to help you.”

“...Please.”

“Nope, no way. I do not work for free. Rather, why not ask that Baba—...I mean small person over there?”

“I can hear you, you bastard... How about I put you in an eternal sleep? Nn?”

A monstrous killing intent assailed Hihiro. Hihiro hesitated, contemplating whether it was a mistake to correct himself by calling her a small fellow.

“Although I don’t want to admit it, that person is strong. She can even clean up that monster without any problems.”

“Oi, don’t drag me into this. Did you really think that I would bother with such a troublesome matter? No! I have no interest in monsters or anything of the sort! Therefore, I won’t even lift a finger! Kuhaha!”

“Yo! As expected of Ojou-sama! Even saints would faint in front of such arrogance!”

“Ojou-sama~! How splendid!”

“Kuhahaha! Praise me more! Hahahahaha!”

Watching her laugh loudly as she was praised by her attendants, Hihiro felt like he was getting a headache. He made a mental note to not become like her.

“Uun... I want Hihiro.”

“Nn? Me?”

“Un.”

“Why?”

“Why.....Why?”

“No, I’m the one asking here...”

Camus tilted his head and blankly stared at Hihiro, Hihiro already understood what Camus was so perplexed about..

“Anyway, I will—”

“Then, what should I do?”

“Huh?”

“What should I do.....to have you come with us?”

“.....”

Hiiro once again realized just how stubborn Camus was. As he did, he had a great idea.

*(Speaking of which, I just leveled up a lot. I want to try that out...but...)* Actually, when Hiiro won the battle against Camus, he gained a few levels... Since Camus was of a higher level than Hiiro, he was able to get a lot of EXP from defeating him.

“Let’s see. How about you become my underling?”

“Eh? Underling?”

“Nah, I’m just joking.”

“I will.”

“Just a joke.....Huh?”

Hiiro could only stare at Camus, completely speechless. His eyes looked serious, if anything, it felt like they were sparkling in happiness, but it might have just been Hiiro’s imagination..

“O-Oi...”

“I will become...underling. So, your strength...lend it to me.”

Hiiro completely meant it as a joke. Hiiro knew that having a tribe chief becoming an underling wouldn’t happen. So Hiiro threw it out there to get some time to think of what to ask in exchange for his assistance.

However, when one looked into Camus’s eyes, one could clearly see that he was being serious.

“Hey now, you do understand, right? You, the chief, to become some random traveler’s underling, there is no way your tribe could agree with that, you know?”

“Un...that’s right.”

“Hey, don’t just say...‘that’s right’...”

Whenever Hiiro had to deal with Camus, his pace would completely get thrown off.

“But...I decided to...be greedy.”

“Huh?”

“If it was only us...it’d be dangerous. But... if Hiiro comes...the risk of us getting wounded...decreases.”

“.....”

“I will protect...everyone. In order to do that...I will use any means available. What Hiiro spoke of...greed...is just like that.”

Normally, as a leader, their pride wouldn't even allow one to lower his head like this. It was hard to believe, that someone would be able to accept something like this so easily.

However, Camus was willing to take any means necessary in order to protect his tribe. Even if he had to throw away his position or pride and allow himself to be used by Hiiro, he was willing to accept it all to protect everything.

*(Haha...this kind of foolish greed also exists, huh.)* It certainly was Hiiro who gave him that advice. However, Camus came out with an extremely direct interpretation of it. Hiiro couldn't help but laugh at how pure Camus was.

Seeing Hiiro grin slightly, Camus tilted his head sideways...

“Haha, man, you're quite an interesting guy, aren't you.”

“...Really?”

“Aa, let's go with that. However, will it be fine for you to decide to become my underling all by yourself? No, you talked about it with the blind old man, right?”

“Un...but everyone will agree with it. After all...it's for peace.”

Hiiro looked into Camus's eyes. They were totally sincere and not even a wisp of hesitation could be seen in them. He was simply driven by the desire to protect his tribe. Camus was completely different from the hesitant person before.

“Haha, you're quite an honest guy. ...Alright. With this, you will be my underling from now on.”

“Really?”

“Yes, it was quite unexpected, but I will take this as payment. I will also need to live up to your expectations. ”

Camus made a victory pose to Hiiro's positive answer. To Hiiro it was fine either way. However if he were rethink it again, he could obtain delicious food and obtain various information from them so it turned out to be an excellent trade. Another thing that put him into an accepting mood, was because he leveled up.

“Seems like you have finished talking.”

Looking for a gap to step in, Sivan walked over to the two. On his side, there were others of the Ashura tribe, including children.

“I talked with everyone. Though, there are some who still don't agree.”

“That's right! Why should Camus become that guy's underling!”

“Chief! We can handle the monster of the desert by ourselves!”

One of the children and Jin-u complained, but Camus raised his hand to silence them.

“No...I already decided. When it comes to protecting everyone...I will do anything.”

The Ashura watching Camus could feel his decisiveness and were unable to say any more. However, the children still said what they honestly thought.

“But, are you fine with that Camus Camus! Becoming that guy’s underling...”

“That’s right! Camus Camus is the tribe chief!”

“Nn... It’s alright.”

While saying that, Camus placed his hands on the children’s head.

“Hihiro is.....interesting.”

The children were rendered speechless by Camus’s comment. Sivan was the only one smiling as he turned to Liliyn.

“Liliyn, your companion is lending his power, but you aren’t going to?”

“Fun, why would I need to bother with such a troublesome task? In the case of monsters and the like, my minion Hihiro will be more than enough.”

“Oi, who are you calling YOUR minion!?”

“Nh? Hihiro is...her underling? Then, Am I also...her subordinate? Hmm? Eh?”

Confused about how the relations worked out, numerous question marks floated above Camus’s head.

“But, are you fine with that?”

“With what, old man?”

“The monster of the desert is really strong. I did see that youth’s ability, but I am still uneasy. After all, it has absorbed Camus’s father Rigund.”

“Fun, like I care about that.”

“Oh, then what are you going to do if the youth happens to die? Isn’t he the object of your interest? If he dies, you’ll be bored again.”

Sivan said that to Liliyn, while rubbing his chin.

“Mu...Muu.”

Lilyin deeply pondered what Sivan said. At long last she found something that interested her. Hihiro, what was more she decided to follow him on his journey. Moreover, the journey had just begun. When Liliyn thought of losing her rare toy here, uneasiness flowed into her heart.

“I-It can’t be helped. Silva!”

“Yes.”

“You’ll be helping them.”

“Certainly.”

“Oo~h, as expected of the Red Rose Witch, being so generous!”

“Hmph, it’s a given! My heart is deeper than the sea! Kuhahahahaha!”

Hearing Liliyn’s words Sivan made a small fist bump. Liliyn, who hadn’t notice that she had been manipulated by Sivan, was laughing in high spirits from the praise. Honestly speaking, Sivan wanted to have Liliyn lend her own strength, but judged that this was better than nothing.

*(Besides, that butler... his existence feels strange like the youth’s. Well, he can’t be a common person as Liliyn has taken him to her side.)* Sivan thought he could increase their fighting force, greatly increasing the odds of winning against the Desert Monster. He felt relieved, that by stirring up Liliyn, he pulled Silva in as well.

“By the way, where’s the monster?”

Jin-u expected the question and answered

“It lies in an area called the Boulder Desert east of here.”

Like its name implied, the Boulder Desert was an area where many huge rocks resided. Near it there was an oasis where the Ashura tribe originally dwelled. Also, one of the large rocks there was named the Grave Tower where the deceased slept.

The Grave Tower was located a notable distance from the monster. But because there was a 1-in-10,000 chance that the Grave Tower might be destroyed in battle with the monster, no one in the Ashura Tribe had the motivation to engage the monster.

“I see, because there are large rocks all over the place, we would be able to set up an ambush ”

Sivan nodded at Hiiro’s analysis.

“It is certainly so. However, the monsters of the desert have troublesome abilities, and the Desert Monster has absorbed many of them.”

“It’s as Sivan says...but on top of that...the most difficult one...is Dad’s power.”

“Power? Do you mean magic?”

“Yes. Same as...mine.”

Hiiro thought that it would be really dangerous. Not only did the monster have the abilities of many other desert monsters, but could use sand magic, which was advantageous in the current terrain. Because Hiiro fought against Camus, he fully understood its potential.

“...We should decide who will go.”

“Hohou, for what reason?”

Liliyn admiringly asked for the reason behind Hihiro’s decision.

“Hindrances will only make this harder.”

The Ashura were angry at Hihiro’s statement. However, Liliyn gave a nod while grinning.

“Kukuku, won’t you just obediently say that you can’t protect everyone alone?”

“Shut up. It isn’t just that. Certainly numbers increase the strength, but that also depends on the enemy.”

“N... What do you mean?”

Camus asked while he tilted his head.

“The monster can use the same magic as you, right? Using it in the desert will be effective against both single and multiple targets with all the sand. Also wasn’t your father very skilled at using sand?”

“Yes. Dad is...even more skilled at wielding it than I.”

“Then it’s clear that even if we attack in a huge group there’s a high risk for casualties before we can even deal any damage. Also, it’s not just the casualties that will be the problem but also having the shock of seeing someone close to you die. Even you, can you say that you will stay calm when you see the monster that has the appearance of your father wounding or killing your tribesmen?”

“I don’t know...if I can.”

Camus looked down and clenched his fist hard. Even if it wasn’t his father, seeing someone with the same appearance cut down your tribesmen one after another might cause Camus to lose himself.

“That’s the most troublesome aspect. Also, are there any others who may have the resolution to kill the monster with appearance of the former chief?”

Hihiro’s question caused a commotion among the Ashura. There were some who also turned pale. All of them had been indebted to Camus’s father, and some have had their lives saved by him. Whether they could suppress their feelings and take the monster’s life was what worried Hihiro.

That was exactly why Hihiro judged that they should decide who to take with them. If someone who hadn’t made up their mind participated, they’d only turn into a liability.

“And there’s one more thing. Among your people who are currently wounded, is there anyone with a strong will?”

“Eh? ...Yes.”

“But you still lost. In other words, the monster is stronger, and that is exactly why there shouldn’t be any hesitation in killing it. Nitouryuu, didn’t you say that you don’t want your tribe to get harmed? Then you should head out only with a small number of people, in general your best. It’s up to you to select the ones



who are strong and are willing to confront the monster and return safely.”

“.....I understand. Everyone...are you still fine with this?”

Camus turned to his tribe and asked. Listening to the talk, they were unable to hide their troubled expressions. They looked at each other, and questioned themselves whether they could really kill Rigund.

Among them, there was one who immediately came out and knelt in front of Camus.

“Chief, I, Jin-u, have already prepared myself for this.”

“Jin-u...”

“The previous chief... Rigund was a person whom I admired, and the one I desired to be like. But now, he must be suffering after having his mind corrupted from being turned into a monster. And, that can be said for the current chief as well. Since that happened, you were suffering all this time. I have entrusted my life to the chief from the beginning. Please use me however you see fit. Together let us free Rigund!”

“...Jin-u... Thank you.”

He closed his eye momentarily, but it was only for a moment. Then, he stared directly at Jin-u “But...don’t tell me to...use your life.”

“Chief...”

“I...think you should take care of your own life. So...don’t die, Jin-u.”

“...I understand.”

Watching the exchange between the two, the others also started to show a will to participate. However, Camus refused them by shaking his head.

“I have something...for everyone to do.”

“Yes. The monster of the desert possesses an ability to call other monsters. Your role will be to prevent them from getting near Camus’s group. Leave handling the monster—...Rigund—to Camus and Jin-u.”

Each one of them reluctantly nodded at Sivan’s statement. However, with this it seemed to have been decided who would face the monster of the desert.

Afterward, they spent some time figuring out the most effective way to fight and it ended off with Hihiro summarizing it all up.

“I’ll sum it up. For the ones who can fight, we’ll leave only a minimum number to defend here and the rest will go to the surrounding area of Boulder Desert . There, we will engage the monster. The ones who will be fighting the monster are me, Jii-san, Nitouryuu and Topknot.”

“T-Topknot...?”

Jin-u didn’t seem happy with the nickname. However, Hihiro continued with the explanation.

“The monster of the desert has the ability to call other monsters out, and if it ends up being used and other

monsters come, the Ashura on the outside will take care of them. You got that?”

Everyone nodded in agreement.

“Kozou, you don’t need to worry. If they turn out to be useless, I will take care of the small fries.”

The Ashura become very motivated when Liliyn said so. They wanted to show her not to underestimate them “What, you’ll be also coming along?”

“Of course. I couldn’t be missing out on this interesting show, right? Kukuku.”

“Fun, what a wicked loli.”

“Sheesh. As usual this baba is only driven by her own desires.”

“Did you kids say something?”

For Liliyn to call even this old man Sivan a kid. Just how long had she lived...

“U-Um, um, um, what should Shamoe do...?”

“Shamoe, you will stay safe behind me, and calm down.”

“Y-Yes! I will do my best to to stay calm!”

Even though Shamoe answered with great determination, she didn’t know the meaning of the words she used. She’d only be a burden so she was meant to just quietly stand by.

“Okay, if you are ready, let’s go.”

# Chapter 93: New Word Magic Ability....and Title

Rocks of the huge and small varieties were lying around. Despite calling them small, they were still about the size of a person, the larger ones being close to ten meters tall. Counting through them one by one would be an endless task, however, the desert monster was lying somewhere among them.

( *Boulder desert* , huh... *It's exactly like that.*)

While endless numbers of rocks kept appearing in the distance, Hiiro was thinking of the battle strategy.

(*First, we need to find the monster itself... however, before that—*)

Hiiro noticed that he had leveled up after he won the fight with Camus. As such, he was currently thinking about the new ability his Word Magic had gained.

HIIRO OKAMURA		Lv. 81	
HP:	1720/1725	ATK:	504566
MP:	3000/3000	DEF:	405420
		AGL:	637639
EXP:	600976	HIT:	356364
NEXT:	21707	INT:	555559
Magic Attribute None			
Magic Word Magic One-Character Chain Unlocked, Air Writing Unlocked, Parallel Writing Unlocked, Two-Character Chain Unlocked, Simultaneous Invocation Unlocked, Invocation Management Unlocked, Three-Character Chain Unlocked			
Titles Innocent Bystander, Other Worlder, Word Master, Awakened One, Ripper, One Who Imagines, Killer of the Unique, Gourmet Bastard, One Who Follows His Own Path, Friend of the Fairies, Mikazuki's Owner, Monster Slayer, Wanderer, Lightning Speed, Sage, Loli Killer, One Who Is Skilled in Magic			

And so, as per expectations, Hiiro had gained new abilities. Hiiro chuckled to himself as he had determined that fighting Camus was the right choice.

However, there was a title that caught his attention. Putting aside the last one for the moment, the title Loli Killer was a bit concerning. For some reason, Hiiro felt irritated about those words. Although it was Hiiro's nature to confirm something that bothered him, yet, at the same time, Hiiro felt that he would regret confirming the meaning behind those words.

Even so, he almost unconsciously clicked the words Loli Killer with his finger.

Loli Killer

You seem to be an existence that is blessed by, and attracts, little girls. In the eyes of little girls, your charm has suddenly increased. This is surely because you are also a Loli—

With a snap, Hiiro canceled the explanation interface.

Hiiro was troubled. What was this? He thought that God was teasing him or something. If it really turned out to be the case, he swore in his mind to serve punishment for them with the character `Curse`.

However, as he had previously thought, Hiiro was now regretting confirming the title.

Hiiro sighed heavily. After he escaped from reality for a short period of time, he finally proceeded to address the main topic. Hiiro forcefully persuaded himself that this next part would be very enjoyable for him. Following this, the newly added `Three-Character Chain` of `Word Magic` was clicked.

Three-Character Chain MP Consumption: 600

It is now possible to write and connect three characters. Similar to the two-character skill, the effective range, influence and versatility of the spell improves, although the effect duration still depends on the characters written. When this ability has been unlocked, the restrictions place on two-character spells are lifted. Up until now, if you were to use a two-character spell, the words set using the Invocation Management skill lose all of their effects. However, this restriction is now released. Instead, this restriction now applies to three-character spells. Additionally, the abilities of Simultaneous Invocation & Invocation Management now apply to two-character spells. However, the installation limit of setting 5 words doesn't change for Invocation Management. Furthermore, in regards to Simultaneous Invocation, please exercise caution for there are certain words that cannot be used.

Basically, the restrictions of the `Two-Character Chain` skill were now applied onto the `Three-Character Chain` skill. However, if the process of writing the words was interrupted, the `Rebound` would decrease all of his status fields by 30%. Furthermore, Hiiro would be rendered unable to use magic, as well as being inflicted with a random Abnormal Status. The Abnormal Statuses that may be inflicted include: Severe Pain, Paralysis, Sleep, Blindness and Confusion. This Abnormal Condition would last for duration of 1 hour, while the reduction in stats and inability to utilize magic would last for a period of 6 hours.

This `Rebound` was quite typical, or so Hiiro had thought. He would be subjected to risk even if he attempted to use it. It wasn't as if his status would simply be reduced, nor would he be rendered unable to use magic. The problem was the 'Abnormal Condition'. In particular, the confusion and severe pain caused would leave him at a disastrously high risk for a 1-hour period.

*(No, the possibility of it being paralysis or sleep exists, but...blindness....haa, no matter what it is, it'd probably mean certain death if I got it in the middle of a fight.)*

Although he could probably endure pain, it was undeniably certain that his movements would be hindered. Even after the the affliction had dissipated, Hiiro would most likely be left fatigued and vulnerable. Either way, the necessity for Hiiro to experiment and experience this at least once remained. Rather than having an unknown abnormality, it would be much easier to prepare if he knew what the disorder was. That way,

he would somewhat be able to calm his uncertainties.

*(Even so, I'm grateful for the fact that I can now set two-word spells.)*

With this, Hiiro was now able to implement a large array of tactics, allowing him to display even further cheat-like behaviour. Furthermore, his set words had expanded to encompass **Multiple Words**. In other words, apart from the one-word spell, the continuous writing skill had now become available to Hiiro.

Up until now, whenever Hiiro attempted to use a two-word spell, he could not use any other words. No, although he could activate and use other words, the effects of the two-word spell would be canceled. However, this limitation had now been released.

Now, if, for example, he were to use the word **Flight** to fly, he would still be able to activate words such as **Explosion** or **Speed**. However, as there seemed to be words that would not have this ability, there was a necessity for Hiiro to perform many experiments.

However, the limitations of this seemed to be naturally obvious to Hiiro. If he were to approach an enemy using the word **Transparent** before casting the spell **Sleep**, then he would be so invincible, it would simply be ridiculous. Of course, if his target was one of the magically sensitive **Evila**, then they might be able to somehow deal with Hiiro's tactic. Nevertheless, Hiiro deemed it to be too unfair.

*(Kuku, this is really a Unique Cheat, huh.)*

Even with such a restriction applied, Hiiro couldn't help but involuntarily grin at the tremendous versatility of his own magic. Although there were many methods of execution that would deliver a harsh **Rebound** should they be improperly handled, as long as one cautiously used it, the effects that it supplied were quite significant.

Yet, there was an important point that needed careful attention. This point addressed MP consumption. The new title that Hiiro had just obtained, the one called **One Who Is Skilled in Magic**, seemed to apply adjustments to his MP. Even though it appeared to further increase his MP, even after he had leveled up, Hiiro could still not afford to use his **Word Magic** frequently.

The reason for this was because from the very beginning, **Word Magic**'s MP consumption was significantly high. Even though he possessed several MP recovery items, it would still required Hiiro to buy time to be able use them during combat...

*(Wait, I guess I could use the word **Protect** while taking the recovery items...)*

Such an issue was easily resolved. Yet, even so, the fact that Hiiro had a large MP consumption rate would not change. If he wasn't constantly paying attention, there was always the possibility of Hiiro having a depleted MP gauge when he let his guard down. As it seemed that there might not be enough MP to utilize during important times, it might prove fatal in this world.

Furthermore, although this time he was now able to cast three-word spells, the MP consumed was 600. No matter how one thought about it, it could not be considered normal. If Hiiro were to use **Air Writing** in conjunction with this skill, the MP cost would be  $600 + 100 = 700$  MP. This meant that he

could only use this combination of skills 4 times if his MP was completely full.

*(I guess this is what they call the price of power<sup>88</sup>, huh.)*

As Hiiro had a limited supply of MP recovery items, he determined that he had to make effective use of them. Even so, it would not change the fact that his ability was a cheat.

*(Now then....this time, I guess I'll be experimenting against the Desert Monster, huh....)*

As Hiiro's party arrived at the Boulder Desert area, they stopped as they arranged themselves, seemingly without any spirit.

"Everyone...move as planned."

The Ashura Tribe nodded at Camus's order and moved out from that spot. They swiftly headed to their positions. The only ones that remained were Hiiro, Liliyn, Silva, Shamoe, Camus and Sivan. Only these six.

They surveyed the desert, yet, the desert monster could not be seen. It might have been hiding among the large boulders. Meanwhile, Liliyn called out to Hiiro.

"Oi, Kozou. Are you planning on slaying the monster?"

"No, I'm merely assisting them."

"Then, that fellow will deal the finishing blow...huh?"

As she spoke those words, she shifted her gaze toward Camus.

"That's right. This is the Ashura Tribe's problem. So this problem should be resolved by the Ashura Tribe's Chief himself."

"Hou. But can that guy really kill it? Even though his father is dead, from what we've heard, it appears to have taken on his father's appearance."

"It seems so."

"But that fellow values the tribe above all else. Wouldn't it be quite a difficult opponent for him?"

"...Who knows. However, this would be the so-called turning point."

"The turning point?"

She knitted her eyebrows as she looked up at Hiiro.

"Aa. If he turned away here, that means he would continue to live while being unable to kill his father."

"However, in that scenario, the tribe would spend everyday frightened by the monster. If they allowed the monster to run wild again, it is possible that they would be annihilated."

"Aa. If they choose to fight now, it will no longer be possible to turn back. Though I asked those fellows, it seems the barrier is made of that guy's father's life. Seems to be already reaching its limit. If we

provoke the monster this time, even if they ran away, it would be sure to follow in pursuit.”

If that were to happen, their oasis would be found, placing the tribe in danger. The children would also be helplessly killed.

“Even if you advance by one step from here, the only road left to you is to defeat the monster. If they moved back from here, they would only gain a brief period of peace. However, even if they did advance, the only options left before them would be whether they defeat the monster or not.”

“So it’s either Heaven or Hell...huh?”

“So it seems.....apparently that guy’s already made his choice.”

Upon seeing Camus’s eyes, there was no hesitation present. Hihiro slowly approached him.

“It seems like you’ve got your resolve, huh?”

“Nn...I have. I....will defeat it.”

“Chief, even though I’m inferior, I shall also assist you!”

Camus nodded slightly in response to Jin-u’s words as he stared ahead.

“....Let’s go!”

# Chapter 94: Confrontation, the Demon of the Desert

Liliyn and Shamoe were to watch from afar, so they were left on standby in the previous location. Hiiro's group was to follow Jin-u's leadership. Behind Jin-u was Camus, then Hiiro, and finally Silva, who covered their tracks as they trekked across the desert.

*(There are a lot of obstacles here. This garden of rocks may put us at an advantage, but if the other side is intelligent, then that advantage disappears.)* If it was even able to absorb Regund's knowledge, and thought patterns, then the battle would be the same as fighting a human. For that reason, the other side might be able to use tactics as well. Hiiro's party could hide in the shadows of the rocks to close the distance and launch sneak attacks, but if the enemy possessed human-level thought, they would be able to enact countermeasures.

The group gathered around a single large rock, and observed their surroundings.

"Last time, he was lurking in the sand dune ahead."

Jin-u said as such while facing Camus. Sure enough, there was a large hill of sand in front of them. Nearby, a monster called a Mad Scorpion was wandering around, leisurely lifting its multiple appendages to proceed forward. Then at that moment...

*~Swish!*

From the sand, something resembling a tail emerged. It wrapped around the Mad Scorpion's body and began giving off a poisonous violet aura.

"KIIIIIIII!?"

The Mad Scorpion cried as it desperately flailed its body around, but its legs only touched air. It tried to escape from the tail's clutches in midair, but in the next moment, the owner of the tail showed itself.

"It's the Demon of the Desert!"

As Jin-u's words reached Camus, his face stiffened.

"...Father."

Hiiro carefully observed the Fiend. It definitely looked more like an Evila than a monster.

It had a freely extending prehensile tail, and a body covered in tough scales. The traits of the Ashura Race were still visible, a flat forehead, and above was a head of white hair that didn't give off a sense of life. In contrast, his pure red eyes surely conveyed a strong desire to live.

Drool dripped from the monster's mouth as it retracted its tail, and lifted its feet, which were furnished



with sharp claws.

*(...Hm? What's that orb?)*

From what Hihiro could see, there was an orb the size of a fist embedded in the pit of the monster's stomach. And the orb appeared to be going through a steady cycle of expansion, and contraction, almost as if it were a beating heart.

"Oy, what's that pulsating ball on its abdomen?"

"We presume that that is the monster's core."

Hihiro confirmed his suspicions with Jin-u's words.

"So all I have to do is break it?"

"Most likely..."

"Most likely?"

"In the past, my comrades tried aiming their attacks at the orb. But they weren't able to leave a single scratch on it."

"I see. I thought it was blatantly displaying its weak point, but it's not that simple. That orb's defense must be quite high."

"The cause is probably...that."

"Hmm?"

Jin-u had a difficult expression as he pointed to the monster.

"Look."

Sand circled the monster's feet, and it rose to cover its body. After a while, its whole body was coated in sand, then the sand's color began to change back to its violet coloration.

"What is that?"

"You saw, didn't you? It's a long duration Sand Armor."

Hihiro narrowed his eyes and stared at the monster once more.

"So he can collect sand like that Nitouryuu over there?"

"Right."

Though the monster's appearance hadn't changed in the slightest, there was definitely sand circulating over its body. It was the same magic Camus had used on his right arm in the fight before.

"But, Nitouryuu had sand clearly visible on his arm."

His fist had become gigantic like a golem's, so it was quite obvious. But the monster looked no different

than before he cloaked himself.

“That’s...Father’s Sand Armor.”

The one who answered was Camus. He had a slightly bitter expression floating on his face.

“Sand Armor...if trained...appearance doesn’t change.”

“Gathering sand, and compressing it to the very limit. That’s Regun-sama’s Sand Armor. An unimaginable amount of sand is currently being gathered around him.”

“I see. So that’s what’s raising his defense.”

Hihiro understood why Jin-u called that skill the reason. The core appeared to be out in the open, but around it was a firm coating of sand.

The monster applied more power to its tail and the Mad Scorpion was cleanly cut in half. It fell to the ground, although even now it continued to try and escape. But the monster approached it and shoved it into its mouth whole. It appeared that it was currently scavenging for food.

Its tail twitched back and forth as it appeared to be happily enjoying its meal. Within a minute the Mad Scorpion, which was around the size of two grown men, had vanished completely.

*(So he’s surrounding himself with sand... Then we’ll have to do something about the sand first. With that up, I’m not sure that even Sleep will get through to him.)* Word Magic generally activated on contact. When Hihiro fought the Red Boar a while back, he was able to use Sleep to silence it, but that was because the character had cleanly impacted the boar’s body.

If it had hit clothing, or something else, the effect would not have transferred. The effects only manifested on the thing it hit. So in order to put the monster to sleep, they would have to deal with the sand and hit him with magic directly.

*( Burst and Flame have a large area of effect, so it doesn’t matter what they hit in order to activate because the effect of the word will still affect them, but...)* Regardless of if they wanted to attack the core, or put it to sleep, they would have to deal with the armor. And Camus and the others were thinking the same.

They were quietly observing the monster from behind the rocks, when Hihiro noticed something strange. The monster’s tail was buried in the sand. No, more accurately, it had burrowed into it.

*(What is...w-wait, is it!?)*

Hihiro predicted what was going to happen next. But he was a too late.

~Kabow.

Something erupted out of the sand from beneath the group’s feet. It tried to wrap around Camus’s legs. Because it had emerged behind him, Camus wasn’t able to react in time.

~Swish!

Just as Camus's body was about to be grabbed, the one who saved him... was Jin-u. Because of that, Camus was able to evade the attack, but the one who fell prey to the tail was Jin-u.

“Ku!”

The tail coiled itself around his leg.

“Jin-u!”

Camus fell on his back and cried out. The tail began reeling Jin-u in. It appeared that the Demon of the Desert had long since noticed their presence.

“Damn! We're charging, Nitouryuu! Jii-san!”

“Y-Yeah!”

“Understood!”

In order to keep up with Jin-u, the trio left the rocks and ran toward the monster. Jin-u himself was lying on the ground, covered in the sand he had been dragged through.

“Don't waver! Our first goal is to retrieve Topknot!”

“Yes, I'll have you give him back!”

The monster turned its back to the party. It stepped on Jin-u as the man writhed in pain.

“Gurururu...”

With a sound like that of a lion growling, the monster turned only its head to face the group. Its face was definitely that of a monster. A face that would inflict fear into the heart of any man. But still, there were traces of the individual known as Rigund left in it.

“F-Father...”

Camus swallowed his spit as he unintentionally let out these words.

“Don't misunderstand, Nitouryuu.”

“Eh?”

“That right there's just a monster.”

“...Right.”

“If you don't do anything, Topknot's going to die, you know.”

“!?!?...I won't let him!”

He drew the pair of katanas from his back, and pointed their ends at the monster. The monster responded by displaying clear animosity towards him. It was at that moment that Jin-u regained conscious and turned to Camus. Thinking that an opening had been made, he took his own curved blade from his back, and

swung at the beast, but...

“Wha!?”

As if the monster had noticed his intent, it swung its right arm down on him like a hammer.

“Jin-u!? Get away from him!”

Camus rushed forward with unbelievable speed, and tried to cut the tail in order to free Jin-u. But in front of him, a large wall of sand emerged.

“T-This is...Sand Guard!”

He stopped his feet, but Hiiro, who was by his side, scolded him.

“Don’t stop! Head straight for it!”

Around Hiiro was a light blue barrier of magic. Camus looked toward him, and understood what he was going to do. He fell in line behind him and kept running forward.

Hiiro wore a wall of protective magic as he collided with the wall of sand. And just like the time with the wave of sand Camus used, the wall... didn’t break.

Camus couldn’t hide his confusion when witnessing it. He was shocked at how his sand could be defeated, yet this monster’s could not. Of course, Hiiro was also shocked at the current situation. But while he was a bit surprised, he still kept his composure.

*(As I thought. Protect only works when guarding against an attack, but this wall of sand wasn’t made to do harm. It’s good that I foresaw this.)* The word Protect could avert blows, but it couldn’t be used to ram against other walls for offense. It only responded to moves made with the intent to attack. As Hiiro had a hunch, he wasn’t too flustered. He just wanted to try it for argument’s sake. So at this point, he had already prepared another word on his finger. He pointed his hand, and fired it.

“Now! Rush through!”

“Eh? B...But!?”

“Trust me. Aren’t you my subordinate!?”

“...Yeah!”

Camus rushed into the wall at full force. Before impact, he swung his katana as if to cut it down, but it went through without resistance as if he were cutting through tofu.

What Hiiro used was Soften . It was a word he had experience using. With it, he was able to turn hard objects soft.

“Haaaaaaaah!”

Camus breached the wall, and cut at the monster’s tail before his eyes.

“Kuh! It’s hard...but...!”

Perhaps the monster had absolute confidence in its wall. Its body had gone stiff for a moment after the wall was breached.

Camus used both of his arms and put in all his power. And finally...

His blade pierced cleanly through the sand wrapped around the tail. Camus kicked the monster away, took the weakened Jin-u over his shoulder and took some distance.

# Chapter 95: Resolve

The monster, that was slightly knocked back, scowled at Camus.

“Guraaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”

As things didn’t go its way, a current of anger flowed through the monster as it became enraged. As if expressing irritation, it showed off the severed tail that swung with a hum from side to side.

“Are you okay?”

“C-Chief.....I’m sorry.”

Jin-u’s face was distorted with pain as he apologized while bitterly thinking he had caused someone trouble.

“Oi, what’s that?”

Taken aback by Hiiro’s words, they glanced in the monster’s direction. The sight that met them shocked them both.

“Gurururururu!”

Somehow, the severed part of the tail had grown back.

“Oi oi, it can even regenerate itself? I guess the usual methods won’t work, huh.”

“How shall we proceed, Hiiro-sama?”

“Let’s see, I’ve got something in mind, but.....”

Honestly, if all he had to do was kill it, Hiiro could somehow manage it alone. However, in this case, he had restricted himself to being a helper since the Ashura Tribe’s chief, Camus, was the person expected to defeat the monster.

“As I thought, we will be exclusively supporting Camus until the end?”

“Hou, you seem to understand, huh Jii-san.”

“Nofofofofo! Well then, let us try our best to do that!”

At that moment, the shadow at Silva’s feet twisted and coiled upward into his hand, taking the shape of, what appeared to be, a table knife.

“Lets go! Chaotic Butler Toss!”

Silva flew up into the sky as dozens of knives rained down upon the monster. However, the wall of sand

materialized next to the monster once again, blocking them.

During all this, Hihiro approached Camus and whispered to him.

“Listen up—similar to before, I’ll make the sand surrounding its body become soft. Although the sand covering the tail seems to have quite a lot of strength, it’s got nothing to do with defeating him. As such, your attacks should pass through. Focus all your efforts into piercing the core.”

“.....Got it.”

As he took his hands away from Jin-u, he glared at the monster with a piercing gaze.

“When I give the signal, move forward.”

“Yes.”

Although Silva was still attacking, when the wall of sand suddenly collapsed, the monster was nowhere to be seen.

“Mu?”

Upon also noticing the situation, Silva furrowed his brow.

*Dobaa*<sup>89</sup>—!

“What is going on!?”

The monster somehow flung itself upward underneath Silva while he was still in the air. It appeared that the monster had burrowed itself under the sand. The stinger on its tail pierced Silva’s body.

“Muu!”

As expected, Hihiro also opened his eyes wide upon witnessing such a sight. Certainly, the monster’s stinger was similar to a Mad Scorpion’s. Upon lodging its stinger into the body, it would release a paralyzing neurotoxin that deprived the victim’s movement. Following this, it would seem that the scorpion would then devour its prey, bit by bit. A similar stinger was currently lodged in Silva’s body.

Of course, Camus began to move in an attempt to try and save Silva. However, Hihiro stopped him by holding his arm in front of Camus.

“Hihiro.....?”

“Be still.”

“But.....Jii-chan is.....”

“Listen.....be quiet and watch.”

Camus tilted his head, giving off the feeling that he did not understand what Hihiro was talking about. Why shouldn’t he try to save a wounded ally? Although he doubted Hihiro’s actions, Camus looked up and watched Silva and the monster.

“Gururururu!”

“Gufu....uh...uu...”

Silva looked like he was going through intense pain. Looking at it, you would think the monster already had him. However, he somehow grabbed the tail.

“.....?”

“Ku.....Nofofo, did you perhaps think that I was taken out?”

Silva, who was just suffering a second ago, loosely puffed his mouth.

“Shall I hold onto this dangerous thing?”

As he said so, Silva lifted his right hand, as if he were lifting a wineglass. Following this, a black sphere appeared in his palm. It seemed to be about 20 cm in diameter. Next, he gripped the tail with his left hand. Finally, the globe disappeared as it was absorbed into the tail.

“Pool Ball.....”

At that moment, an extremely thin rectangular object appeared from where the sphere had been absorbed. It was clearly caused by the black globe absorbed a moment ago.

The black rectangle quickly sliced apart the monster’s armor. It was like paper being cut with a razor. Once again, the monster’s tail was severed from its body.

“Gura—!?”

“On account of this sultry embrace, kindly separate from me.”

*Buuuun*<sup>90</sup>—!

The black rectangular object morphed back into a sphere and shot out like a cannonball.

*Doga*<sup>91</sup>—!

The monster’s body bent forward as the sphere superbly struck the monster’s stomach. The monster that was just attacked had a dumbfounded expression, as it crashed into the ground without any means of protection.

Silva, who was stabbed by the monster’s stinger, nonchalantly left the location .

“Oi, isn’t there something stuck in your stomach?”

“Oya? How inconsiderate of me.”

Silva gently plucked the tail out of his body and tossed it on the ground.

“Heh, you were fine after all.”

“I’m afraid I am not fine. It made a hole in one of my good suits...”



“.....You’re basically unharmed..... Seriously what in the world is your body made of?”

“Nofofofofof! It’s because I am a butler! Nofofofofof!”

After he spoke these words, Silva was dismayed due to the fact that he would be scolded by Ojou-sama about his tattered uniform. Meanwhile, Camus and Jin-u were blinking in surprise as they watched the embodiment of strangeness known as Silva.

“*Eto.....you are.....fine?*”

Camus couldn’t bear remaining silent and asked. However, Silva, who seemed to have his usual appearance, expressed a smile.

“Nofofofofof! My apologies for having worried you! As you see, I’m quite well!”

When Hiiro saw how he bowed politely, he did not notice anything abnormal in his physical condition. Although he wasn’t surprised at this inexplicable situation because he’d seen it before, it was different for the other two. Still, Camus could now understand the reason Hiiro stopped him from helping Silva.

*(He was trusted.....by Hiiro..... That’s somehow nice.....that sort of thing.)* As Camus had definitely felt their mutual trust, he was slightly envious of it.

Hiiro disregarded the gaze of the pair who seemed to want an explanation since he did not have time to explain in detail. Their top priority was to eliminate the enraged existence in front of them.

“Jii-san, can you destroy that monster’s wall of sand again?”

“Nofo? Most certainly!”

Silva headed toward the monster again after he said that.

“Listen, I’ll say it again. We will have a chance after this. Promptly....kill it.”

“U....Un.”

He swallowed loudly before nodding.

Immediately after Hiiro confirmed his response, he channeled magic into his fingertip.

Tracking 92

*(With this, I can find it no matter where it hides.)*

In response to Silva’s knife attack, the monster erected another wall of sand, all according to plan. Following this, it then disappeared by once again diving into the ground. However, this time Hiiro’s senses were able to capture the monster’s position. It was as if his eyes were capable of locating his target’s position via use of thermography<sup>93</sup>. Hiiro knew that it was moving through the sand with incredible velocity.

“...Alright.”

Hiiro quickly wrote a word and waited for the moment when the monster tried to come out of the sand. Following this, Hiiro clenched his fist in anticipation. And, *Zoba*<sup>94</sup>—!

At the same moment the monster came out of the sand, Hiiro vanished. He then reappeared next to the monster. He had used the character *Transfer*<sup>95</sup>, a two-word spell he had set up before this fight. He was thankful for his Lv. 80 abilities as he was now able to instantly activate *Two-Word Chain*<sup>96</sup> spells without having to write them on the spot.

The monster's eyes were wide with surprise when Hiiro suddenly appeared before it. Following this, Hiiro pointed his fingertips at the monster. Hiiro proceeded to shoot the other word he had written. Normally, he would be hard pressed with hitting such a quick foe, however, it was currently caught off guard. The situation was similar to how a moving car was unable to make a sudden stop.

*(In other words, it can't avoid this!)*

Hiiro activated the effect of the word he set up before teleporting close to the monster. He used *Soften*—the same one he had used before. With this, the defensive power of the sand armor was nullified.

“Next is this!”

The back of Hiiro's fist shone as he activated another word he had set up using *Word Magic* .

*Colossal Strength*<sup>97</sup>

He felt power gather in his right hand.

*Bakiii*<sup>98</sup>—!

Hiiro's fist shot toward the face of the monster, upon impact it made an unpleasant sound, as of flesh and bone being smashed. Blood trailed behind the monster as it was sent flying away.

*Dosun*<sup>99</sup>—!

It plummeted to the ground and created a plume of sand. With the defense of the sand armor nullified, in addition to the increased attack power from the word *Colossal Strength* , the monster received a lot of damage, even though the soft sand broke its fall.

The monster rose unsteadily.

“Here's another one!”

Hiiro used *Air Writing*<sup>100</sup> to write *Harden* and shot it at the sand under the monster. Like the time with Camus, it has now been rendered unable to manipulate the sand.

“Now! Do it!”

Hiiro shouted at Camus who was nearby waiting for orders. Hearing the voice, Camus narrowed his eyes and gripped the twin katanas in his hands.

“...Tou-chan<sup>101</sup>.”

From where he was standing, Camus charged full-speed at the monster. The pulsing core in the monster’s stomach was reflected in his eyes. As far as Hihiro was concerned, the sand’s defensive force was practically nonexistent. Furthermore, the monster could no longer erect a defensive wall as the sand had been rendered unusable due to the word Harden . If Camus reacted too late, he might suffer some damage. However, if he attacked now, he would definitely defeat the monster.

“.....Kill....I will kill it.”

In that moment, the question of ‘Who was he to kill?’ surfaced in his mind. Following this, his father’s smiling face flashed before him. A nostalgic scent tickled Camus’s nose.

“.....Tou-chan.....?”

Everyone thought it was over. Thanks to Hihiro’s plan, they were perfectly prepared. Although Jin-u suffered a little damage, no one was killed. Above all, they were all liberated from the monster’s terror.

Watching from afar, the people of the Ashura Tribe were confident in their victory.....until just now.

Involuntarily, everyone stiffened at the unforeseen spectacle reflected in their eyes.

“That idiot!”

Hihiro was the only one that, in response to that spectacle, had...actually, Hihiro couldn’t help but reveal his frustrations towards the cause of such a spectacle.

Because next to the monster’s core, the crossed katanas had stopped. Looking closely, the monster was still standing. Although it wasn’t that the monster somehow stopped the attack. Actually, Camus intentionally stopped his ongoing assault.

“Ku....”

His dual katanas trembled slightly. No, it wasn’t just the katanas, it was Camus’s entire body that was trembling. Still leaning forward, his face was slightly raised. Even though his eyes were set on the monster, Camus’s face was distorted by sorrow.

“...I can’t.....do it.”

Also puzzled by the unexpected action, the monster remained still.

“Because.....Tou-chan.....his smell was there...”

“What are you doing! Quickly! Give it the finishing blow!”

Hihiro descended from the sky and shouted at Camus.

“I.....I....”

As he said so, a single teardrop was shed from Camus’s eye.

“I.....can’t do it.....Tou-chan...”

Upon seeing the tear, the monster was taken aback. In that moment, Hiiro clearly felt the monster’s blood lust diminish. However, this was truly only for an instant. The monster’s thirst for blood and rage surged, surpassing their previous levels.

Following this, the imperceptibly regenerated tail’s stinger moved in an attempt to stab Camus.

“CHIEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEFFFFF!!!!!!”

Jin-u embraced Camus as he jumped to the side. However, they did not completely dodge it. The stinger had gouged a chunk of flesh from Jin-u’s back.

“Guu—!”

“Jin-u!?”

The two simply fell to the ground in such a state. Camus used his body to cushion Jin-u’s fall.

“Jii-san! Buy me some time!”

“As you command!”

It would seem that Silva grasped the current situation. He created another one of those knives and threw it. However, the monster avoided it by jumping away from its current location.

(*Chi<sup>102</sup>, and just like that, it’s already recovered!*) The monster appeared to have recovered from Hiiro’s attacks as its movements had been restored “Gururururu!”

As the monster provokingly looked at Hiiro and the others, it opened its mouth wide and—  
*Kiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiin—!*

It released a considerably high-pitched tone. As they were struck with an unpleasant, almost ear-ringing sensation, Hiiro involuntarily frowned.

“I-I see, this is!”

At the same time Hiiro realized the meaning of the monster’s behavior, in response to the monster’s cry, similar cries sounded nearby. Following this, the sand from both sides of the Desert Monster ascended into the air with a bashing sound. From within the sand, new monsters emerged.

“As I thought, this is the monster’s ability to call reinforcements!”

“It seems to be so. Apparently, they are coming here in groups from afar?”

It was as Silva had indicated. Even though it was quite a distance away, they were able to discover several monster-like shadows scattered here and there.

Upon confirming this, there were people that could be seen attacking the monsters in the distance.....they were the Ashura Tribe . This situation was one that the group had more or less expected. As such, it was unlikely that the surrounding monster reinforcements that headed in this direction would not be

capable of approaching Hiiro's location.

*(Maa, Akaloli did say that she'd move if push comes to shove. I guess it should be fine to ignore the other monsters. The real problem is.....these three here.)* Naturally, one of which was the Desert Monster. With regards to the other two, one was a giant monster known as the Gray Golem . The remaining monster was called a Mud Man , a monster that possessed a mud-like body.

They had only heard about the information regarding these monsters from the Ashura Tribe . They were Rank S monsters. In all honesty, they had wanted to resolve this before the Desert Monster had called for reinforcements. However, now that it had come to this, it was imperative for them to think of an alternative method to resolve the situation.

“Jii-san, do you mind me leaving the rest to you for a bit?”

“...What are you planning to do, may I ask?”

“I'm gonna give that idiot a wake up call.”

As he shot those words out while wearing a disgruntled expression, a blue vein surfaced on Hiiro's forehead.

“Nofofofofo! Oh dear, oh dear<sup>103</sup>. In which case, I shall also strive to try my hardest.”

As Silva sharpened his gaze, he stood in front of the three monsters. Upon seeing this, Hiiro changed the direction of his body quickly before moving his feet. In front of the direction he was heading in was.....the place where Camus was currently at.

Upon seeing Jin-u raising a voice of agony due to receiving the attack from the stinger, Camus was flustered. As Jin-u's face grew pale, the wounds he received on his back began to painfully ooze crimson blood.

“Jin-u.....I.....I.....”

It was clearly Camus's fault that Jin-u had received such an injury. As he was torn between the self that was unable to do anything for Jin-u and the self that had his will to fight warped, Camus had fallen into a state of panic.

At this time, Hiiro had approached. As Camus thought that Hiiro would be able to do something, he raised his head.

*Baki—!*

However, before he had been aware of it, Camus's face was distorted due to a stinging in his cheek, and heated by daylight entering his mouth. Camus had now understood that he had fallen to the ground. Furthermore, he realized that Hiiro had hit him.

As he slowly got up, Camus simply stared at Hiiro, his eyes opened wide. It was an expression that indicated that he was unable to comprehend why Hiiro had hit him. In the face of such a Camus— “You're really unsightly, aren't you?”

“.....Eh?”

As Hihiro pierced Camus with a chilling glare, he folded his arms and looked down upon him.

“How’d this situation happen?”

“.....”

“You made your resolve, right? Even so, what’s with that shocking display? There are limits to how unsightly one can be.”

“H-Hihiro.....”

In the face of those ruthlessly thrown words, Camus was rendered unable to answer.

“The reason for that Topknot bastard’s suffering is because of you. The fact that the Desert Monster was able to call for reinforcements, turning this into a pain in the ass is also your fault. Most importantly, the reason why I’m so damned frustrated is also your fault!”

Hihiro’s words, loaded with anger, continued.

“That stinger probably has a neurotoxin, right? A poison that steals away one’s ability to move. But if the place it lands is near the heart, it will stop even the heartbeat. The one receiving the attack will die.”

“T-That can’t be! We have to do something! B-Because of me, Jin-u is...!”

*Baki—!*

Hihiro hit Camus’s face once more.

“Aa, that’s right. All of this is your fault. Incidentally, those from your Ashura Tribe who are fighting other monsters may make a mistake and end up receiving a fatal wound. That would be your fault as well.”

“Uu...I...I...”

Camus grinded his teeth as he slowly shed tears once more.

“What is it that you want to do?”

“...Uu...uu...”

“When you said you wanted to protect everything, was it a lie?”

“It was...not a lie...”

“...You said it, right. That you could smell your father’s scent from that monster.”

With tears still running down his face, Camus turned his eyes to Hihiro.

“Then perhaps a fragment of your father’s consciousness continues to dwell in that monster.”

“...—!?”

Camus took a deep breath as he looked at the monster. He saw the figure of the monster matching blows with Silva, an incredibly angry expression plastered on its face. It definitely didn't seem like the sort of expression his father would make. Still, it was undeniable that the scent of his father, Rigund, emanated from the monster.

Following this, a different scene entered Hihiro's eyes. For a brief moment, upon seeing Camus's tears, the monster's hostility abated. Perhaps it was the sliver of Rigund that continued to dwell within the monster. His response to seeing his son's expression of sorrow.

"Watch closely."

Hihiro glared at the monster.

"If that monster's your father, then will you do nothing but cry in his presence? Is that all you can do?"

".....Tou-chan."

"Don't mistake what you're showing for kindness."

"....."

"Familial piety. You're thinking of your family. Even when he looks like that, you can't kill your father?"

Camus silently hung his head. Hihiro took that as a sign of affirmation "If that's your father, then isn't that all the more reason for you to end this with your own hands?"

"My own...hands?"

"Not hurting your family. That isn't kindness; it's just you acting spoiled. Looking at him now, you know what you have to do. You know what you need to do for your father, don't you? And all you can do is cry?"

"I...am..."

"True kindness only has meaning when you can use it as strength. At the very least, that's what I believe."

"Hihiro..."

In truth, it was a line he had read in a book once before. However, it was also true that it had left quite an impression on him.

As the two's eyes met, Hihiro slowly opened his mouth.

"Go save him. With no hands other than your own."

"....."

"The one who can truly free him from his suffering is no one but his son. Are you sure that you're just going to watch him without doing anything?"

Life returned to the pupils of Camus's eyes.

“Or will you let a simple traveler, an uninvolved bystander like me kill him? Your father? It’s not like I really care though?”

“...No.”

“?”

“I won’t let...you do that.”

“...Then what will you do?”

Camus placed his hand on the fallen Jin-u’s shoulder.

“Jin-u...I’m sorry. But... It’ll be alright.”

As he spoke, Jin-u faintly opened his seemingly heavy eyelids that had been closed until now. A slight smile floated on his face.

“Y...Yes... I’ll leave...Rigund-sama in your...hands.”

“Un.”

Camus gave a strong nod, and stood up straight. He turned to Hiiro.

“Take care...of Jin-u.”

“...Just go put an end to this already.”

“Yeah!”

Camus started off in the monster’s direction. Hiiro moved his eyes towards Jin-u.

“Oi Topknot. This is a loan. You’ll pay it back later.”

“...Ha?”

Although Jin-u was unable to understand the words that flowed out of Hiiro’s mouth, his body was suddenly enveloped in a warm light.

*(W-What is this light...it...feels nice...)*

It was as if he was resting under a warm sun, experiencing the sensation of a cool breeze massaging his body. It was a sensation that resembled being immersed in a bath, its warmth adjusted to the perfect temperature. As he was overcome by the urge to continue experiencing this phenomenon forever, his eyelids naturally began to gradually descend over his vision.

With the word Hiiro used, all of the wounds Jin-u sustained began to close themselves. Moreover, Hiiro’s magic gently wrapped around Jin-u’s body, and a whimsical expression appeared on his face as the power lulled him to sleep.



Hihiro felt some fatigue well up in his body. That one cost quite a bit of MP. He took out an MP recovery item from his pocket and tossed it into his mouth. He had made it a regular practice to carry them with him just in case.

*(Good, now all that's left is that idiot over there.)*

# Chapter 96: The Conclusion and Tearful Farewell

“Jii-chan.....stand back. The rest.....I’ll take care of it.”

Upon seeing Camus’s expression as he rushed toward Silva, Silva released a ‘Hohou’, as if admiring him.

“Apparently, it seems that there will be no problems should I simply leave it to you, yes?”

“Nn.....you had me worried.”

“Nofofofofo! In which case, I shall bring down the other two. You are fine with me leaving you to take care of the main target, yes?”

Camus shook his head at Silva’s proposal.

“Uun<sup>105</sup>. Everything...I’ll do it. So just a bit.....please move away.”

“Nofo?”

As Silva tilted his head to the side, he obediently followed Camus’s directions, falling slightly behind Camus as he stood, gazing at his back.

Camus intently stared at the Desert Monster.

“Sorry...I...didn’t know.”

“Gururururu!”

Further narrowing its sharp eyes, it raised a growl as it seemed to be targeting Camus.

“...Taking on such an appearance...the one in most pain is...Tou-chan, right? That’s why...I.”

Saying this, Camus proceeded to take out a single katana. As one would wonder what he was thinking, he applied the blade to his arm. Following this—

*Tsu*<sup>106</sup>—

In that state, Camus moved the blade, wounding his own arm. Of course, after the sound of tearing flesh was heard, red blood flowed out of the wound.

*Pota pota pota*<sup>107</sup>...

Obviously, the blood fell onto the sand near Camus’s feet, abiding by the laws of gravity. Camus returned the katana to its original sheath. As Hihiro and Silva were unaware of the reasons behind his behavior, they simply watched over him with blank expressions. However, as they did so, the part of the blood-dampened sand near Camus’s feet began to gradually spread out.

“My blood...has infected it.”

*Gogogogogogogogogogogo*<sup>108</sup>!

The ground began to faintly shake. It was as if an earthquake had just occurred. Following this, the part of the sand that had become red rose, floating in midair. The amount of sand was equivalent to the size of a single car.

“The current me...can only wield this amount of sand, but...”

The sand that had been dyed blood red began to move with a *uneune*<sup>109</sup>. It gathered above Camus’s right hand, which was extended toward the sky. Following this, the sand soared further up toward the sky, the large mass of sand dividing into finer, smaller parts.

As the split parts were just about the size of marbles, the number of the sand marbles were so plentiful it would be rather difficult to count them all. The numerous marble-sized parts remained floating in the sky.

“...Red Idol. ....Here it comes.”

Camus’s gaze sharply narrowed.

“Model—Rain.”

*Hyunhyunhyunhyunhyunhyunhyun*<sup>110</sup>!

The cluster of small spheres shot forward with tremendous velocity, their path of flight aimed toward the three monsters. It was almost as if it were red rain.

“Giiiiiiiiiiiiiii!?”

While raising clouds of sand, the cluster of sand spheres mercilessly pierced the bodies of the monsters as if they were bullets.

“Hou.”

Seeing the spectacle, Hiirou released a voice of admiration.

(If I remember correctly, blood itself is magic power. When blood is shed onto the sand, one is able to control the sand as they wish, huh...not bad<sup>111</sup>, Nitouryuu.)

Although the risk of losing blood was present, it seemed that Camus had gained the ability to freely control the sand to his will as compensation.

As the clouds of sand cleared, there were two dead bodies of monsters that had completely been riddled with holes. Furthermore, one more desert monster seemed to have completely guarded the attack with its tail. As such, although its tail had been completely left in tatters, there was not a single scratch present on its body.

“Gurururururururu!”

“...As I thought, it’s hard.”

As Camus appeared to mutter as he said thus, he raised his right arm, directing it towards the sky. As he did so, the red sand that seemed to have sunk into the desert once again gathered toward him.

“However...now, the only remaining one is him, uun, it<sup>112</sup>!”

“Guraaaaaaaaaaaaa—!”

Whether or not it was caused by its anger voltage maxing out, the monster immediately charged toward Camus from its location. As it kicked up the sand, the force of propulsion caused grains of sand to fly into the air.

“Model—Wall.”

A red wall was immediately formed<sup>113</sup> before Camus’s eyes.

*Dogoo*<sup>114</sup>—!

Although the monster simply charged into it—

“If it’s only this much...it won’t break.”

It was as Camus’s words had indicated, even though it had received a rush from the monster that seemed to contain incredible amounts of destructive power, the red wall did not budge at all.

“Model—Knuckle.”

As the sand<sup>115</sup> had formed into the shape of a large fist, Camus aimed a punch toward the monster.

“Gururaa—!?”

As it had received quite the significant impact, the monster’s face distorted as it was launched away. The monster that had charged into the pile of sand staggered to its feet, grinding its teeth with a *girigiri*<sup>116</sup> as the monster’s murderous intent began to swell.

“...Even this is no good.”

As Hiiro was also observing the situation—

*(Even though that should have had quite a lot of destructive power, it was unable to destroy the sand Camus was wearing, huh.....I guess that means it must be considerably dense.)*

Although the red sand seemed to harbor considerable hardness, Camus was still unable to penetrate the monster’s armor.

*(Now then, what’ll you do Nitouryuu?)*

Hiiro watched over Camus from a distance. Camus began to once again change the form of his red sand.

As the monster saw this, it also began to similarly manipulate the sand. A large wave of sand assaulted Camus.

“...It’s pointless.”

*Byunbyunbyunbyun*<sup>117</sup>!

The red sand began to move while drawing a circle.

“Model—Storm<sup>118</sup>.”

The sand that began to swirl around like a tornado was directed toward the approaching wave of sand.

*Gigigigigigigigigigigigigigigigi*<sup>119</sup>—!

Both sides collided, grinding together as if they were blades locked in a competition of close quarters. Then—

*Bushaaaaa*<sup>120</sup>—!

The side that lost was the wave. Once again, the sand returned to normal as it dispersed. Upon seeing this, Camus solemnly knitted his eyebrows.

“...Wrong.”

“Guru?”

“It’s wrong. Tou-chan is.....more amazing.....more skilled....more powerful.”

As if he were glaring, Camus directed his line of sight toward the monster with a ki<sup>121</sup>—.

“You are.....Tou-chan but.....you’re not Tou-chan!”

The red sand once again changed shaped above Camus's right hand.

“Model—Hammer<sup>122</sup>.”

This time, two large sledgehammers were formed. Following this, they headed toward the monster's location with tremendous velocity. One was positioned below, as if it were trying to lift the monster upwards.

“Gurua—!?”

As the monster was sent soaring into the skies, what was waiting for it high above was the second sledgehammer. This time, the hammer was swung toward the ground.

*Bakii*<sup>123</sup>—!

Of course, the defeated monster fell downward in such a state. However, in front of it was another sledgehammer. This time, the hammer tried to thrust upwards, similar before.

*Bokii*<sup>124</sup>—!

As the monster was once again launched skyward, in its path of flight the other sledgehammer, that was facing the ground, was swung downward. This was repeated many times.

“Gugi—! Gagi—! Ruga—!”

It was almost as if they were playing ping pong. The monster that had just become the ball was violently bounced back and forth between the two hammers. However, because of this—

*Piki.....Pikiki.....Paki.....*<sup>125</sup>

Fissures began forming throughout the monster’s body, the sand being gradually stripped away. In addition, a green fluid began to scatter from the monster’s body. This fluid was the monster’s blood. The monster’s arms bent, its tail was also crushed and destroyed. The fact that its blood began to flow meant that all of the sand that it was enveloped in began to erode away<sup>126</sup>.

The sledgehammer looming over high in the sky finally slammed the monster into the ground. As its face distorted in agony, the monster tried to desperately stand as its body trembled.

As Camus took out a pair of katanas from his back, he breathed deeply.

“.....I’ll end this.....Tou-chan.”

In doing so, perhaps feeling fear from Camus’s blood thirst, the monster attempted to escape underground. However—

*Pishii*<sup>127</sup>.....

The monster was seeking to dig into the sand with both hands, yet, it stiffened upon seeing the ground. The reason for this was because the land that should have contained heat, due to the current location being a desert, was now, for some reason, adrift with cool air. The ground had been converted into ice.

“Like I’d let you escape.”<sup>128</sup>

As Camus was also surprised, he turned toward Hiiro. As he did so, he saw Hiiro crouched down, writing something onto the ground.

### Frost Conversion

This was the result of using a Three-Word spell for the first time. The result was being able to transform the surface of the nearby desert into a land of ice within an instant. Its effective range seemed to be tremendous. From what one could see, even the place where the Ashura Tribe was fighting further away seemed to have frozen over.

Although it seemed that everyone was puzzled by the abrupt change in the situation, the one who was actually the most bewildered was Hiiro.

*(.....To think that it possessed this much of an effective range. This is certainly a big surprise.)*

As expected, the effect did not encompass the entire desert. Even so, compared to the one-word spell’s range of four tatami mats, the effective range was quite frightening. Although he had maintained his poker face, the fact that his mind was racing<sup>129</sup> remained Hiiro’s secret.

“Now! Finish it, Nitouryuu!”

As it suddenly occurred to him upon hearing Hiiro’s words, Camus once again placed strength into his entire body. Following this, Camus rushed toward the monster from that position at full speed.

“Guru!?”

The monster rose to its feet, as if in a panic. In the face of the sudden change in the environment, as well as receiving Camus’s murderous intent straight ahead, the monster fell into a state of confusion, its body rendered rigid and immobile.

“Haaaaaaa—!”

*Bushuuuuuuu*<sup>130</sup>—!

“Guraaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa—!?”

The two swords pierced the sphere that was at the monster’s core. Camus’s face stiffened as he clenched his teeth. As he saw blood flowing out of the mouth of the monster that was imitating his father’s face, Camus’s expression darkened as he felt the sensation of taking its life.

As he pulled out the pair of katanas, the monster simply fell on its back with a *dosa*<sup>131</sup>, its waist bent.

“*Haa haa haa haa haa.....*”

Although it could be said that he had saved everyone from the monster’s terror, Camus’s face was not colored with a shade of joy. In contrast, his body was trembling, his head was faced downward, wearing a melancholic expression.

“Gufu—!”

The monster spat out a large amount of blood. The movement of the monster’s core began to calm. At the same time, its sharp, red eyes that were constantly blurred with hostility began to gradually transform into pupils harboring a purple light.

“.....Ca.....mus.....”

As if it were surprised that Camus was able to take action to such extent<sup>132</sup>, it widened its eyes. Following this, Camus stared at the sprawled out monster with a feeling of disbelief. The monster only moved its line of sight in Camus’s direction.

“.....Camus.”

This time, there could not be any mistake. That voice and those eyes. Without a doubt, they were something that Camus recognized.

“Tou.....-chan.....?”

The swords that he held in both hands fell to the ground with a *dosu*<sup>133</sup>—. Following this, he rushed toward the monster that had fallen to its knees.

“Tou-chan!”

“.....Camus.....sorry.”

“Uun.....Uun.....Uun!”

Camus shook his head over and over again in denial. From his eyes flowed a large amount of tears.

“But.....you did good, Camus.”

“Tou-chan!”

The two people that were close, Hiirō and Silva, also approached. Following this, although the two’s eyes met and expressed bewilderment, they simply watched over Camus and Rigund silently.

“Sorry.....because of me, you were made to do something this painful.....”

“Uun.....Uun! Because I’m the chief.....I will protect my comrades.....Tou-chan is the same!”<sup>134</sup>

“Hahaha.....I see.....you’ve matured. Huh, Camus.”

“T-Tou-chan.....”

“You’ve become.....Chief, huh.....haha, even in that respect, you are my son.....”

While faintly smiling, Rigund stretched his trembling left hand little by little, placing it on top of Camus’s head.

“You’ve.....become strong, huh.”

“*Higu.....gusu.....*”<sup>135</sup>

As Camus snorted, a teardrop fell onto the sand.

“Although.....I was mostly unconscious, I felt it. Your strength.”

“.....Really?”

“Aa, you’ve become stronger but.....even so, in order to reach my level.....you’ve got a long way to go.”

“.....Sorry. It would have been better.....if I released Tou-chan sooner.”

“.....Haha, I’m really happy<sup>136</sup>.”

“Tou-chan?”

“Unlike your mother that passed away earlier.....I was able to see your matured figure before my very own eyes.”

Camus’s mother passed away from an illness soon after she had given birth to him. Ever since then, Rigund decided in his heart to raise Camus into a respectable person. However, as the Desert Monster incident occurred, Rigund was ultimately only able to raise Camus with his own hands for a short period



of a few years. For him, that was something that he would deeply regret.

However, as he was able to see the figure of Camus having become a splendid person—

“This.....should be a good tale to tell them.”<sup>137</sup>

The ‘them’ that Rigund referred to was obviously Camus’s deceased mother. Rigund placed strength into his arm as he began to stroke Camus’s head.

“Listen Camus.....”

“.....W-What is it?”

“The culprit that did this to me was that man.....be careful of Scarface .”

“ Scarface .....”

Camus recalled the individual that had assaulted them while riding on top of the Desert Tortoise’s shell. That person certainly possessed a cross-shaped scar on their cheek.

“That guy.....he said he was testing something.....what he was testing, I have no idea but, it can’t be anything good. Yet.....he also said that.....he had no more use for this desert.”

Yet, even so, there was still the possibility that they might come again. Thus, Rigund told Camus to remain cautious.

“It’s okay.....I will protect.....everyone.”

Upon seeing Camus’s expression filled with resolve, Rigund blissfully slackened his cheeks.

“Haha, you’ve still got a long way to go. Your sand manipulation is still—*gufu*—!”<sup>138</sup>

“Tou-chan!”

Rigund once again vomited blood as his agony began to show. As his breathing grew rough, his feet began to crumble as if it were made of sand.

“Tou-chan! Your feet!?”

“Haa haa haa haa.....listen.....Camus.”

“Tou-chan!”

“Listen up.....*goho goho*<sup>139</sup>! Haa haa haa haa.....become stronger.....go.....surpass me.”

“Tou-chan.....un.....un! Un un! I vill.....ged stronger.....I vill, zo.....”<sup>140</sup>

As he discharged a large amount of tears and snot, it was hard to make out what Camus was saying. Yet, Rigund was simply smiling.

“I von’t loze.....tu anywan.....I von’t lose—! Dat’z wai...dat’z waii—!”<sup>141</sup>

The area around Rigund's neck had already turned to sand, dancing in the breeze.

"I'll be watching over you.....my most cherished son."

Following this, Rigund's entire body returned to the sand.

"Dat'z waiiii—! Don't worriiiiiiiiiiii—!"<sup>142</sup>

In this moment, the struggle against the monster of the desert had truly come to an end. Even though it was a conclusion filled with sorrow, Camus had obtained many things from the incident.

As Camus gazed up at the sand dancing in the sky, he strongly tightened his mouth. Although he possessed androgynous features, the expression he was wearing clearly belonged to the face of a man. As he was shouldering what had been entrusted to him by his father, it was the face of a slightly larger individual.

# Chapter 97: Rebound of Word Magic

Right after Rigund disappeared, Jin-u, who was healed with the word Complete Recovery, opened his eyes. Camus filled him in on the details. Jin-u ground his teeth as he regretted being unconscious the entire time this was happening.

“That’s how it turned out...but for Rigund-sama to smile in his last moments...”

“.....Un”

Jin-u closed his eyes and looked up, seeming to experience a flood of emotions, after which he exhaled softly.

“Thank goodness. Chief...sorry for causing you trouble.”

“No. The one who should apologize...is me. Sorry...if I had been ready from the start...”

“Chief...”

“But, there is something that bothers me.”

“What is it?”

“What happened...to your wounds?”

“A-aa... About that...”

At that moment, Jin-u glanced at Hihiro. However, Hihiro simply stood there with his arms crossed and his eyes closed. Jin-u worried whether or not he was allowed to talk about it, however, he remembered that he wasn’t specifically told not to.

*(Before I lost consciousness Hihiro mentioned a debt, but...)* After vaguely recalling what happened and looking at Hihiro’s attitude, Jin-u figured he could talk about it.

“Actually...”

Upon being told that Hihiro was the one who cured Jin-u’s wounds, Camus reflexively drew nearer to Hihiro.

“Hihiro!”

“W-What?”

“I have...a request!”

“.....Haa.”

Hiiro had a rough idea of what Camus was going to say.

“Please cure my people!”

Hiiro expected it might turn out like this, however, he had already prepared himself for it when he healed Jin-u. Moreover, even if the Ashura Tribe was able to understand his ability, because of their nature, he did not think they would cause any problems. Besides that, there was also the fact that Camus had become Hiiro’s subordinate and because his subordinate’s tribe were under his jurisdiction as well, he was obligated to help them as well.

However, despite it being a request from his subordinate, Hiiro wouldn’t work for free.

“*Haa*, I don’t mind healing them, but only on one condition, okay?”

“Just name it!”

Hiiro wanted to tell him to think for a bit before accepting. However, for a man who boasted that he would do anything for the sake of his tribe, it was the obvious answer.

“...Understood. In that case, you must feed me delicious things until I am content. That’s my condition.”

“Un un!”

Camus’s usual blank face turned into a slight smile as he returned a nod in return.

“*Ohon*<sup>143</sup>! By the way, Hiiro-sama?”

At that moment, Silva called out to Hiiro with a cough.

“What?”

“For an old man like myself, are these circumstances not slightly harsh?”

Silva was looking at the surroundings while he said that. Speaking of which, Hiiro had completely forgotten about it. Currently, the desert all around them was covered in ice. This is the result of using the word Frost Conversion with the recently unlocked Three-Word Chain skill of his Word Magic .

“Now that you mention it, how did this happen?”

Jin-u tilted his head while shivering from the cold transmitted from the ground.

“This...Hiiro did it.”

“...Eh? Chief, is that true? He...did this?”

Jin-u was watching Hiiro and blinking in surprise, but Hiiro ignored him and started to write a word. The word written was Origin . The word that Hiiro always used to remove the Word Magic effects of Harden and Extend .

However, the the word Origin activated like normal but— *Pachin*<sup>144</sup>!

The character cracked and disappeared.

“...Nn?”

Since the word `Origin` wasn't effective, Hiiro had his hand on his chin while thinking. But then he felt pain run through his body like an electric current.

Abruptly, Hiiro groaned and fell to his knees, surprising everyone watching. However, this truthfully was not the first time Hiiro had felt this pain.

*(A-As I thought, it's a `Rebound`, huh...)*

This was the `Rebound` penalty that `Word Magic` incurred if it wasn't properly completed. In order to confirm the effects of the `Rebound`, Hiiro had purposefully triggered it in the past. If he tried to cast a spell and the characters or imagined effect were not adequate, the spell would fail like this one, inflicting pain and reducing his MP drastically.

Therefore, Hiiro was not particularly surprised by this. However, he was more concerned about why the spell wasn't effective. After that, Hiiro reassured the other three that he was okay before he began thinking again.

*(It doesn't work? No...perhaps it's...)*

Thinking that, Hiiro wrote a word on the ground this time. After he activated it, the frozen ground instantly turned back into desert.

*(Hmm, I see.)*

The word he wrote was `Desert Conversion`. Hiiro surveyed the surroundings. Everything seemed to have returned to normal.

*(It seems that Three-Word spell effects can only be removed by using another Three-Word spell. Well, they do have a lot of power, but...)* Since even removing the effect cost a lot of MP, Hiiro noted that he better think twice before using Three-Word spells. After all, he had already used 600 MP casting `Frost Conversion` and, in order to reverse the effects, he had to use another 600 MP for `Desert Conversion`. Doing this unexpectedly took a total 1200 MP. An ordinary adventurer would be completely exhausted after doing that.

When the area suddenly turned back into desert, everyone was dumbfounded—even Silva. Liliyn's group, which was preventing monsters from passing nearby, also turned up.

However, Liliyn was running at them with great speed.

*Dadadadadadadada*<sup>145</sup>!

Liliyn came up straight to Hiiro and grabbed him by the collar.

“Oi, Kozou! What was that just now!? That was your doing, right!?”

Apparently, she wanted to know about `Frost Conversion` and `Desert Conversion`

“Fun, I don’t really mind answering, but weren’t you going to analyze it by yourself?”

Hihiro showed a malicious expression and said that.

“Mu...muu.... That’s... However...”

Liliyn mumbled slightly as she remembered that she certainly had declared so herself. Hihiro made Liliyn release her hand from his collar.

“More importantly, what about the monsters?”

“Ah? Kukuku, those small fries weren’t even enough to kill time.”

“...I thought you said you were not even going to lift a finger?”

“Mu... Shut up! I couldn’t stand watching the others deal with them so slowly so I gave them a hand! That’s all it was!”

Seeing her face dyed red while she was desperately making excuses, Hihiro could only see her as a child.

“Nofofofofof! I’m happy to return to your side, Ojou-sama!”

“Nn? Aa, what... You were still alive, huh.”

The light sound of a tongue clicking could be heard from Liliyn, but Hihiro thought that it was just his imagination.

“Nofofofofof. That cold attitude is embodiment of Ojou-sama’s loneliness! It’s wonderful! This unworthy existence, Silva Plutis, will gladly lend my chest to bury the loneliness of my innocent tsundere ojou-sama. Ojou-samaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!”

The butler jumped toward Liliyn like a frog. At that, a tremendous killing intent burst from Liliyn.

*Pishun!*

Liliyn vanished for a moment but then reappeared above Silva, who had been coming at her from above. She grabbed both of his feet and— *Dosun!*

“Hauuuuu!?”

Liliyn took a big swing with both of her feet and struck Silva’s groin. The men of the Ashura Tribe who saw that instinctively clenched their thighs together. Silva was completely knocked out, showing the whites of his eyes and drooling from his mouth.

“WHO-ARE-YOU-CALLING A TSUNDERE OJOU-SAMA!”

While holding Silva’s legs and crouching on his groin, Liliyn performed a piledriver and planted Silva headfirst in a sand dune. His twitching lower body was the only thing seen above the sand.

*(How pitiable...that perverted butler.)*

Hihiro imagined pressing his hands together and silently prayed.

“Feeeeeee! Silva-samaaaaaaaaaa!”

Shamoe was the only one worried about Silva’s safety, but Liliyn came back over while dusting the sand off her clothes and said to her, “Leave him, he’s already dead.” Being told that, Shamoe once more cried “Feeeeee!” in surprise.

“S-She’s quite something...”

“U-Un...”

“I’m just gonna say this, but don’t lump me together with them.”

Jin-u and Camus were stunned and muttering, however, Hihiro explained to them that he was completely different from those three. Hihiro wouldn’t be able to stand it if they thought he was like them.

# Chapter 98: Tasting the Food! Ashura Nabe

Upon returning to the oasis, Sivan and the others' smiles were the first to greet them. Sivan heard the story from Camus, who was wearing a sad expression along the way, but Camus and the others were able to show a smile on their faces due to their safe return.

Afterward, Hiiro was accompanied by Camus, Sivan and Jin-u to tend to the injured people gathered in the yurt.

"Listen up, what I will be doing must be kept secret."

He gathered magical power in his fingertip "I will only heal their injuries."

The 3 people nodded affirmatively.

Thus, Hiiro began healing each person. Applying the Complete Recovery word magic to do so.

He prioritized the children who were clinging to life. Their mothers, who were nursing them, hugged them tightly and began crying.

And then, not only the mothers but also everyone who was healed were bowing their heads repeatedly in gratitude to Hiiro.

"Rather than doing that, you should honor your promise, Nitouryuu."

"Yes...I understand."

"Hmm? What promise?"

"Jii-chan."

"What is it?"

"Today we...feast."

"Hmm?"

After that it became very busy.

The Ashura Tribe's dream of peace was achieved, and to celebrate Camus hurriedly began preparing for a feast.

Near the riverbank, several people were preparing a large pot, it was there that all the ingredients would be placed and cooked.

According to Camus, the Ashura Tribe used it to cook whenever there was a celebration or a feast.



Everyone from the tribe gathered around the pot to eat and celebrate.

It was also a time when their dead comrades' souls would be resurrected and be with them, at the same time it was an opportunity for the people to get drunk.

The women took charge of ordering the men when cooking. The women yelled at the men when they put in the ingredients too early or when their vegetable-cutting was sloppy. It was like the men were useless when it came to preparing food. But in actuality, the job of the men of the Ashura Tribe was normally to hunt, fight or to face danger while the women's job was to provide support. So for this feast it was really the women that had the upper hand. The men had no choice but to do what the women said.

The stirring of the pot brought forth a nice smell that was carried by the wind that appealed to everyone. It was a strong curry-like smell. The smell made their stomachs growl and their mouths drool which made them unable to work. Even Mikazuki was drooling which resembled a waterfall spilling out of her mouth.

“Hey, Yodare-tori<sup>146</sup>.”

“Gui~”

“What do you mean ‘gui’? Do something about your drooling, there is a puddle of drool already at your feet.”

There was a puddle of drool accumulating at Mikazuki's feet, but because Hihiro told her about it she made a slurping sound to contain the drool, only to have it drip all over again.

Seeing this, Hihiro let out a sigh of exasperation.

“.....Hihiro.”

The voice was from Camus who was coming closer.

“What is it?”

“About Jii-chan....thank you.”

“Don't worry about it.”

Yes, after healing the seriously injured, Hihiro also healed Sivan's injuries as it was a request of Camus. Even though Hihiro thought it was a pain to heal people over and over, he thought better of it.

But Sivan himself refused Hihiro's healing, which surprised both Camus and Jin-u. They didn't understand the reasoning behind it. But Sivan said, “This is a punishment that is etched on my body so that I would never forget.”

He was angered by his own inexperience. In truth, he could have stopped Rigund himself. If he had done so, Camus would not have experienced a painful memory. But his right leg was amputated and his eyes went blind. In the end he entrusted everything to Camus. He wasn't able to do anything. When it was his time to go to the other world, he would think that those were not joyous years. Even though his body could be healed, he could not move the way he could when he was younger. That was why he could not forget his current useless self. He thought to himself that he would carry the burden of his punishment until he

passed away.

But Camus ignored Sivan's words. He grew up to be who he was now because of Sivan's leadership. He was young when he lost his mother and father. It was Sivan who guided him to adulthood. He disregarded all of Sivan's past mistakes like what he was taught a chief would do. Camus wouldn't forget. Sivan didn't need those injuries anymore. That was why he wanted him to be healed as soon as possible.

Upon hearing those words, Sivan pondered for a moment. If he was to be healed, Camus had to fulfill one condition. That his leg would be excluded from being healed.

Pointing to his artificial leg he made his request. Of course Camus protested against this. But this was the condition Sivan had set.

"This stubborn old man," Hiiro said. With Hiiro's magic he could cure his blindness.

Even if his leg were to be brought back, he doesn't have the power to fight like he used to before. But with his eyesight back he could at least see his family. That was why he only wanted his eyesight to be healed.

"But...you are stubborn...Jii-chan."

Camus was able to voice out a complaint.

"That is my wish."

"Uuuu."

"Just you see."

Children were laughing near the pot where Sivan was at. Of course many were surprised to see his eyesight back, but even so, his family was very grateful that he was able to see again.

"Jii-chan looks happy."

Sivan had a smile on his face while he was playing with the children.

"With this...it's fine isn't it?"

"Who knows, but that smiling face isn't bad to look at right?"

"Yes...Hiiro thank you."

Hiiro closed his eyes and crossed his arms. That honest gratitude made his back itch. It wasn't like him, but it was not that bad of an experience, he thought.

Hiiro then heard that the pot was done. He opened his eyes, the thing he was waiting for was finally ready. He then hurriedly walked toward the pot. He saw a hot red liquid being poured into a large leaf being used as a makeshift bowl. It was a stew-like food that had many ingredients in it. It even smelled like beef stew.

He placed (tossed) a handful of soup into his mouth.

Even though it looked that way, it wasn't spicy, it had a sweet and spicy taste which made you want to eat more. If partnered with rice, he doubted that he could have stopped eating. As he was thinking this, one of the children came over and offered him a plate with bread on it.

“Onii-chan, here, take this.”

The child gave it to him with a smile, and everyone around was watching them. The other guys were eating the bread along with the soup, like a fondue.

Hiiro also imitated them on how they eat.

“Oh?”

The moment he ate it, he instantly remembered. It was ‘naan’<sup>147</sup>. It was unmistakably curry with naan bread. Hiiro then proceeded to eat it vigorously.

“Hehehe, is it delicious?”

“Yeah..”

It was another child's face that showed up. This was one of the children that Hiiro healed. He came alongside what seemed to be his mother.

“A, Mom! Onii-chan said it was delicious!”

“Oh? That's great!”

The child replied with a smile.

“I really am truly grateful.”

In the yurt he was thanked more than enough, they still couldn't stop thanking him, Hiiro thought.

However, he didn't feel that it was a bad thing.

“Don't worry about it, by the way this naan...no, this bread, what is it?”

“Oh, that is a fruit<sup>148</sup>.”

As she was saying this, she pointed to a tree. A palm tree from what it looked like. It was bearing fruits the size of volleyballs.

“That fruit needs to be heated at the right temperature for it to be soft like this, it is our staple food here.”

“I see.”

“But in the soup there are Rimone Lemons<sup>149</sup>, Green Crab meat and Torori Shellfish .”

*(I see, so that must explain why I was able to taste a lemon-like flavor in the soup. That's why it had that sour taste. That explains why there is green crab meat in here. It was fun chewing the crab meat, wherein the taste spreads in your mouth. It was also very very soft. It had that red coloring in it even when cooked, the red color dissolves into the stew and becomes white meat, it was the reason why the*

*stew had that red color.)* To top it all off the Torori Shellfish gave off the sweet and spicy flavor to the stew when cooked and mixed together with the other ingredients.

*(I didn't see any other ingredients aside from vegetables, but overall this soup was very well made. I didn't even notice that I already had 5 servings of it.)* As the mother and child's explanation was over, they bowed and went off somewhere. It was then when Lilyn was walking towards Hihiro with a grin on her face.

# Chapter 99: Intoxicated Companions

“You’re too soft towards children, aren’t you?”

“Who knows.”

Since it seemed like the discussion would drag on were he to react, Hihiro gave a half-hearted reply.

“Nevertheless, Hihiro.”

“.....”

“Your Word Magic seems to be quite an amusing type of magic.”

Apparently, this seemed to be the main topic of the conversation.

“I was allowed this time to observe it for a long time on the way.”

According to her, the Desert Monster had continued to call for reinforcements halfway through the battle. As Hihiro had left Camus to take over the fighting, Liliyn lost interest as she began to kill the swarms of monsters in an attempt to kill time.

But then, she was shocked when the ground turned into ice.

“To think that you possessed that much power. Honestly, it makes me more and more interested in you, you know that? Kukuku.”

“Hmph! Still, wouldn’t you agree your magic is something similar?”

As he was annoyed by the fact that she constantly kept pestering him with such notions, Hihiro began to retaliate with his own counterattack.

“Nn? What do you mean by that?”

“Don’t play dumb. You must have noticed by now right? My magic is versatile. It is even capable of examining the information of the target.”

“.....”

She remained smiling silently.

“Your magic....what I saw from before when you dealt with Baron Bone Lizard, those huge spikes were not your magic.”

“.....Hou.”

Hihiro confirmed it by the glint in her eyes.

“Do I have to say it clearly? Your magic is a unique magic....it’s called Fantasia Magic <sup>150</sup>.”

Then, he saw her tremble for the first time. Though her eyebrows twitched, as to be expected, her perpetual smile did not change.

“.....Kukuku, somehow or other, it appears that you are more outrageous than I had imagined.”

“Right back at you.”

As a matter of fact, Liliyn already had a rough idea of how Hiiro’s magic functioned. She anticipated that her magic’s true nature might be discovered by Hiiro. Despite this, her heart stopped from Hiiro guessing it effortlessly.

*(He’s interesting.... He’s really interesting! Besides, I don’t know whether or not this brat has noticed it, but apparently, he has a predisposition for getting drawn into problems easily. Kukuku, if I stay near this brat, I might be able to have an experience that’s far more interesting than the boredom I’ve had to deal with.)* She chuckled at Hiiro’s extremely rare disposition. She was convinced that more interesting things would happen after this.

After that, as they continued to glare at each other, Silva suddenly appeared and changed the atmosphere.

“Nofofofofo! You seem to be having fun Hiiro~sama! Nofofofofo!”

Silva was unusually excited. Although Hiiro watched Silva with an annoyed expression, upon seeing the wooden cup in his hand, Hiiro began to speak.

“Oi, don’t tell me that’s alcohol?”

“Nofofofofofo! Ye~s that is righ~t! It has qui~te a good flavor!”

Gulping sounds were heard as he drunk the alcohol.

“*Puhaa~*, this is irresistible~!”

“Feeeeeeeeee! Don’t drink too much, Silva-sama~!”

While Silva was dancing in ecstasy from the alcohol, Shamoe was frantically trying to stop him, yelling in a desperate voice. However, as this had hardly any effect at all, she was on the verge of tears.

“U..u.uuu.. As I thought, Shamoe really can’t do anything. I really am a Hopeless Maid <sup>151</sup>....sniff.”

Liliyn also had a strange tension about her. Then he took a close look at her, she also had a cup in her hands. Apparently, she seemed to have been drinking as well.

“Yeah, this is really quite delicious.”

Liliyn, who had the wooden cup before anyone was even aware, drank in a similar manner.

“Hey, how about you?”

“Don’t need it. I’m not interested in alcohol.”

“Hmph, the gaki-bastard<sup>152</sup> isn’t? To think you cannot drink this amount of alcohol, what a boring guy.”

“What was that?”

There was a vein popping out of his head.

“You won’t drink my alcohol..aa~ iyada-iyada<sup>153</sup>. There is someone here who does not understand how delicious this alcohol is...well for a brat like you, I guess milk is preferable.”

As she began to leave after saying those words, Hiiro firmly grabbed Liliyn’s arm.

“Mu?”

“Are you underestimating me? It doesn’t mean that I cannot drink alcohol, I’m just not interested in it.”

Hiiro forcefully took the wooden cup from her hands and drank it with great intensity.

“O..Oi, that is...”

Liliyn seemed to be agitated by this situation, though Hiiro did not pay any attention to her.

“*Puhaa*~ how about that!?”

Hiiro looked a little displeased. Although he had been boasting a while ago, he did not actually understand anything about alcohol. He just poured it straight down his throat without tasting it.

However, in contrast to Hiiro, Liliyn was blushing as she glanced back and forth between the cup and Hiiro’s mouth.

“Uh? What’s wrong Aka-loli<sup>154</sup>?”

“It...It’s nothing!”

After she had said that, Liliyn took the cup from Hiiro and left.

“.....What’s with her...?”

Hiiro tilted his head, not really understanding what had just occurred.

A little ways away, Liliyn was motionlessly staring at the cup she was holding with both hands.

“N...No, though I do not have to worry about this insignificant little thing. But why does he not respond to this? Is he accustomed to it? No, no, to begin with, he doesn’t care about this, still.....”

Her face was dyed a gentle shade of red while she traced where his lips had been with the tip of her finger.

“Onyaa~, O~jou~sama~! What seems to be the problem?”

The butler who couldn’t read the mood showed up. He was grinding his teeth and his shoulders were shaking. He, the drunken butler who couldn’t read the atmosphere, thrust out his mouth similar to giving a kiss.

“O~jou~sama, this butler will, without fail, embrace you and kiss your lovely mouth~”

Steam came out of Liliyn’s head when she heard the word ‘kiss’. Then, his lips that reeked of alcohol gradually approached hers. Seeing that, a vein appeared on her head.

“Hohou.... Do you want to kiss that much?”

“*Muchuu~*”

“Then, to your heart’s content!”

Liliyn embraced Silva with her small body.

“ O-oooo~! Thi... This is quite assertive!”

However, for some odd reason, his body was somehow floating in the air.

“Nofo?”

And while in that position, the ground approached with a terrible speed. No, it was his very own body that was approaching the ground.

“No, nofuooooooooooooooooo bugh!?”

As it happened, Silva’s face pierced the ground, silence enveloping the surroundings. Liliyn looked down on the body of Silva with her arms folded.

“Just die in the ground already.”

The Ashura Tribe was dumbfounded when they saw the situation. The children who saw Silva’s body stuck in the ground found it amusing and began to poke his body.

*(What are those guys doing....)*

Hihiro seemed to have been amazed at the situation and let out a sigh.

*(And, this fellow...)*

When Hihiro glanced to the side, what he witnessed was Shamoe, breathing deeply while sleeping with an adorable expression on her face.

*(Haa, they’re all the same as always.)*

As if troubled, Hihiro placed his fingertips onto his temples and shut his eyes. Still, he noticed a warmth spreading throughout his body, most likely caused by the alcohol. As the day ended a pleasantly cool breeze began to flow, resulting in a nice feeling. Thus, he thought that such a day was not so bad as he admiringly gazed at the night sky.



The next day, Hiiro and his companions decided to continue traveling because they could finally cross the desert. However, those who expressed their misgivings about the situation were Camus and the children.

“Hiiro... Let’s be together.”

“Impossible. There are things I have to do.”

“...I heard about it yesterday. You’re traveling the world.”

“That’s right.”

“Who cares about that! You get to live with us!”

“Right, right!”

“Don’t go Hero!”

Before he had noticed, Hiiro’s name seemed to have spread. Ever since yesterday the children had been happily shouting ‘hero’.

“I also want to go.... But I...”

“You’re right, you’ll protect your tribe right?”

“...Un.... However....I’m Hiiro’s subordinate.”

He looked down solemnly as he said that. Everyone understood how greatly he wanted to be with Hiiro.

“Nitouryuu<sup>155</sup>.”

“What?”

“If we meet again and you have become stronger, then I will call you by your name.”

Taken aback, he suddenly looked up at Hiiro

“Really!?”

“Ah, yes, so do the things that you need to do.”

“...Un! I....we were saved by all of you. Therefore...this favor...I will return it someday...surely...without fail!”

“Well then I shall wait without any expectations.”

Hiiro’s cheeks slackened slightly as he spoke.

Following this, Sivan opened his mouth to speak to Liliyn.

“Liliyn, although I’m not worried about you, it appears the ambitions you spoke of before have yet to be realized.”

“Hmph, I’ll realize them eventually.”

“*Hohoho*, when that time comes, by all means, I will lend you my power. ~Nou.”

“...That’s natural. Since the old days, you’ve owed me for many things.”

“That’s true.....be in good health.”

“Don’t go and become cowardly, alright?”

“Like you can talk, Loli-baba<sup>156</sup>.”

“Shut up, you Damn Serious-jiji<sup>157</sup>.”

As they said so, they both directed a smile at the other. This might have been their way of saying their farewells. Following this, Hihiro mounted Mikazuki.

“Hihiro....”

“What?”

“When you get into trouble.....I will come running to your aid.”

“.....Later.”

“.....Un!”

Camus’s expressionless face changed into a smile. The children by his side were also smiling as they expressed their gratitude. Naturally, the others did as well. Together, they all sent off their tribe’s benefactors.

“Let’s go.”

“Kui!”

“Farewell, Sivan.”

“Nofofofofo! Those were wonderful people!”

“F-F-F-Farewell to all of you!”

Thus, the four departed from the Ashura Tribe’s village. Following this, Camus and the others waved until their backs disappeared beyond the horizon.

“They left already?”

“N.....”

Camus’s expression had a small trace of loneliness, it was the face of a man hiding a certain determination. Following this, he turned around to face everyone.

“Everyone! Let’s go report everything....to the Grave Tower !”

In response, everyone raised their voices in strong agreement. They wanted to tell their wonderful experiences to the companions who were resting at the Grave Tower , yet, the true reason for the visit was because they wanted to let them see the growth of the Chief of their tribe. In addition, they needed to make a new grave for Rigund, Camus’s father.

Peace returned to the desert, although there were still monsters that naturally wandered the sands. So as not to lose to the monsters, Camus decided to work harder for the sake of prolonging the Ashura Tribe ’s prosperity.

*(I’m also greedy like Hiiro. I’ve determined again that I will defend everything as long as these hands reach them. And I look forward to becoming even more powerful so that Hiiro will call me by name when we meet again.) (I will proudly meet my friend someday.)*

# Translator/Editor's Notes

1. ↩ Demon Beast
2. ↩ Wasn't sure of an English equivalent. Anime eyes due to surprise/something unexpected. **This** is the closest thing I found.
3. ↩ Sound of dull impact.
4. ↩ **Uguu**
5. ↩ Child, brat
6. ↩ Sfx for teleportation apparently.
7. ↩ Just shouting.
8. ↩ Censor bar.
9. ↩ Little girl = ‘     ’. Kind of demeaning. GT pushed out alternate translations such as ‘lass’ or ‘puss’. I think you can see why I opted for little girl.
10. ↩ *\*guragura\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*wobble\**.
11. ↩ Not sure how to literally translate. The kanji reads as Forbidden Emperor Cloud | ‘     ’. The furigana suggests to read it as Kin Tei Un.
12. ↩ Furigana literally indicates to read this as ‘Red Rain’. Thus, you’ll be seeing it a lot in the chapter with no variants.
13. ↩ The skill name was not explicitly stated. However, I felt it needed to be included in order to preserve grammatical quality.
14. ↩ *\*zaza\**: Japanese onomatopoeia signifying heavy rain. Like *\*pitter patter\** except multiply effect by a large amount.
15. ↩ **Guerilla rainstorm**
16. ↩ Gulp

17. ↩ Some sort of roaring sound.
18. ↩ Sound of something moving really fast in the air.
19. ↩ Stab
20. ↩ Finger snap.
21. ↩ Clumsy Maid
22. ↩ Donkan protagonists are donkan.
23. ↩ Literally translates to 'Let me borrow your face'. I'm assuming it means she wants to borrow him for a bit.
24. ↩ Hikikomori
25. ↩ *\*Pata\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*close\**.
26. ↩ Japanese was written with Katakana, not the Kanji. This indicates that she doesn't know the meaning of the word, just the pronunciation.
27. ↩ *\*kirakira\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*sparkle\**.
28. ↩ The Jap used here is ' '.
29. ↩ *\*furufuru\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*tremble\**.
30. ↩ *\*hyoi\**: Hard to explain in this context. Here.
31. ↩ Sound of the door shaking.
32. ↩ *\*Zuzu\**: Japanese onomatopoeia for *\*sinking\**.
33. ↩ *\*Gura\**: Japanese onomatopoeia for *\*sway\**.
34. ↩ An incomplete sentence, thus, an incomplete translation...
35. ↩ She uses 'ie' | ' ' which literally means no. Intended meaning is 'No need to worry'.
36. ↩ This is not paraphrasing. This is actually what he uses. The word used is Hame | ' ' which means 'to fuck', 'to screw'...
37. ↩ Baba: An informal/disrespectful way of addressing an elderly female. Think 'old woman' or 'old hag'.

38. ↩ *\*Piki\**: Japanese onomatopoeia for *\*twitch\**. If you've watched anime, you probably know what this sounds like.
39. ↩ Kora: 'Hey'.
40. ↩ *\*dosu\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*thud\**.
41. ↩ Gufu: Groan of pain.
42. ↩ Gyaa: Groan of pain (how many groans are you gonna cycle through?).
43. ↩ -chi: A suffix used to denote familiarity with the subject. It also usually infers that the speaker has a playful, childish personality.
44. ↩ Uun: An expression displaying negation, denial. Different from and opposite of 'un'.
45. ↩ Owa: Groan of pain (Groan Variety Count: 4).
46. ↩ -su: A suffix used to indicate a quirky style of speech. Used similarly to '-yo', '-zo', or '-nano'.  
Side Note: We are using this suffix to indicate this quirky style of speech. We are not necessarily using it as the Japanese would.
47. ↩ Shift to polite speech indicates that she stops talking in Kansai-ben.
48. ↩ Iya: In this context, means 'Ma~n'.
49. ↩ Ano: 'Um' or 'Excuse me'. Difference with Eto is that 'Ano' is used to try and grab someone's attention.
50. ↩ Eto: 'Um'. Difference with Ano is that 'Eto' is used when collecting one's thoughts.
51. ↩ Eden of Grisaia | Grisaia no Rakuen.
52. ↩ He: Not male pronoun 'he'. The 'e' is pronounced the same as in egg. A Japanese expression denoting admiration or sarcasm.
53. ↩ Written in Hiragana (a.k.a no Kanji). Indicates it's meant to be read by children who do not know how to read Kanji. Although, doesn't really make sense as Ranalyth is a different language but...meh. It's Japanese context is as such.
54. ↩ Written in Hiragana.
55. ↩ Tsukkomi
56. ↩ Ita: An expression denoting pain. Literally derives from the Japanese word for pain, Itami | ' '. Think 'ouch' or 'ow'. (Groan Variety Count: 5).

57. ↩ Something like **this** or **bottom left**.
58. ↩ It's not that I have an aversion to insensitive/oblivious protagonists/characters, I just feel that it's execution is usually sloppy, to the point that it becomes very unnatural. Especially in this case.
59. ↩ Taishi's name in kanji means Ambition. Word play of some sort.
60. ↩ In this context: 'Hm?'
61. ↩ 'Hmph'; not pronounced at all like the English word.
62. ↩ Sfx for shuffling away.
63. ↩ ' ,
64. ↩ Weapon clashing.
65. ↩ Pretty boy
66. ↩ Scimitar of some sort, from the bishounen.
67. ↩ KS = Kill Steal
68. ↩ If you didn't know, Camus is pronounced Kamyu.
69. ↩ About 1,240,000 m<sup>3</sup>.
70. ↩ This is how I added the accent of Sivan's manner of speaking, just get used to it.
71. ↩ Sound effects for a loud roar.
72. ↩ **Shamshir**
73. ↩ Hohou: An expression denoting intrigue.
74. ↩ Nitouryuu: Literally Two Sword Style (If you've watched/read SAO, you know what this is).
75. ↩ *\*Kiiin\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*plink\**. Think of the sound swords will make when they clash.
76. ↩ Jap is Kuso Majime Jijii Me | . Kuso (Fucking/damn) | Majime (Serious/straight)  
(Old man) | Me (bastard).
77. ↩ Jap is Loli babaa me | . Loli (Lolita) | Babaa (Hag) | Me (bastard).
78. ↩

79. ↩ *\*Bashin\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*deflect\**. It's the sound of the force field repelling attacks.
80. ↩ Japanese here is . Literally means symmetrical people. However, it's a phrase used to indicate that two people are asymmetrical. (I think? If anyone knows better, please tell me. I just learnt it from [here](#).)
81. ↩ *\*Shun\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*shoom\**. Think of the sound wind makes as it rushes past you (ie. someone running past you).
82. ↩ *\*Parapara\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*pitter-patter\**. Similar to rain, I guess?
83. ↩ *\*Gorogoro\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*tumble\**.
84. ↩ *\*Dogan\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*thump\** (I think). Basically, the sound of a large impact.
85. ↩ Fee~: Shamoe's expression of confusion. (For those that love to point this out, it is different to Rishia's Fue. Rishia: | Shamoe: .)
86. ↩ XJ: No. This is not the skill name. Raw :
87. ↩ Fearful/childish "Oh Crap!"
88. ↩ Clunky trans, I know. The RAW is Bannousa no tsuke | . My interpretation is (almighty) no (indicates possession) tsuke (price). Any suggestions/corrections welcome.
89. ↩ - doba - jap || SFX of the sand erupting
90. ↩ - bun - jap || SFX for shaking something with great force
91. ↩ - doga - jap || SFX for great impact
92. ↩ [Tracking] | | - 2 word character, - search, - enemy
93. ↩ **Thermography**
94. ↩ - zoba - jap || SFX for moving instantly
95. ↩ [Transfer] | | - 2 word character, translated as Transition or Transfer
96. ↩ is normally translated as [Two characters] but I changed it's name to [Two-Word Chain] spells since it is such a waste if we don't utilize their names.
97. ↩ [Colossal Strength] | | - 2 word character, - strong, - Power



98. ↩ - bakii - jap || Sound for an impact from an attack
99. ↩ - dosun - jap || SFX of impact of falling to the ground
100. ↩ - Normally translated as a context like [Hihiro writes a new character i skill name since it has the same meaning delivered.
101. ↩ - touchan - eng || I want to use Daddy so that it accentuates Camus's clumsy nature.
102. ↩ - chi - jap || SFX of a tongue click
103. ↩ - oh dear oh dear - eng || Think of [My My] or [My Goodness] in a formal way.
104. ↩ |Complete Recover| | - Two word character, - Completion, -Rule or Recover
105. ↩ Uun: Different from Un. An expression of denial. Alt Trans: No.
106. ↩ \*Tsu—\*: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning \*slice\* (I think?). Think of an appropriate sfx that fits the context.
107. ↩ \*Pota\*: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning \*drip\*.
108. ↩ \*Gogogo\*: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning \*rumble\*.
109. ↩ \*Uneune\*: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning \*meandering\* (what the?).
110. ↩ \*Hyun\*: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning \*woosh\* (man, this is corny...).
111. ↩ The phrase used here is yaruna | which essentially is 'way to go'. It can also be interpreted as 'not bad', thus, I opted for the latter as I feel it fits Hihiro's character.
112. ↩ Phrases used here are Hitori | and Ippiki | . The difference is between the differentiation. Hitori is used exclusively for humans. Ippiki is used for non-humans (objects/things/stuff). Not 100% sure about what ippiki is used for, but the main point is that Camus differentiates the monster from human.
113. ↩ RAW is Dekiagaru | . Used formed as 'completed' didn't really fit context.
114. ↩ \*Dogo\*: Japanese onomatopoeia for a light impact.
115. ↩ Sand is not mentioned in the RAW. Making assumptions.
116. ↩ \*Girigiri\*: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning \*grind\*.
117. ↩ \*Byun\*: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning \*zoom\*.

118. ↩ Kanji is *tatsumaki* | meaning ‘tornado’. Furigana states ‘storm’ .
119. ↩ *\*Gigi\**: Japanese onomatopoeia describing the sound of swords grinding together.
120. ↩ *\*Busha\**: Japanese onomatopoeia describing the sound of sand dispersing (not sure).
121. ↩ *\*Ki—\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*glare\**.
122. ↩ Kanji is *outsuchi* | meaning sledge hammer. Furigana is meaning Hammer.
123. ↩ *\*Baki—\**: Sound of impact.
124. ↩ *\*Boki—\**: Similar to *\*Baki—\**.
125. ↩ Cracking sounds: *\*Piki\**, *\*Paki\**
126. ↩ RAW is *hageta* | . Used ‘erode away’ instead of ‘peel off’ as it fits Eng better.
127. ↩ *\*Pishi\**: Hard to explain, depending on which context you use.
128. ↩ The RAW is . I’m using ‘escape’ to make it flow better in English.
129. ↩ RAW is . It literally translates to ‘mind is thumping’. I chose racing, because thumping brain?
130. ↩ *\*Bushu—\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*slash\**.
131. ↩ *\*Dosa\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*thud\**.
132. ↩ I’m sorry. I’m not too sure about this line. Any who have better interpretations are welcome to suggest them to me. RAW:
133. ↩ *\*Dosu\**: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*drop\**.
134. ↩ RAW is This can be interpreted in the following ways: Camus will protect his comrades like his father did or his father is a comrade that Camus will protect.
135. ↩ Camus crying. I can’t be bothered trying to explain it now...
136. ↩ RAW is . Literally means ‘I’m a happy person’. Left much to be desired, thus, the lil trans.
137. ↩ RAW is . Reworked to make it flow better.
138. ↩ Rigund coughed mid sentence.

139. ↩ \*Goho\*: Japanese onomatopoeia meaning *\*cough\**.
140. ↩ Camus's speech becomes garbled. Here's the proper English: I will.....get stronger.....I will, so.....
141. ↩ Camus's speech becomes garbled. Here's the proper English: I won't lose.....to anyone.....I won't lose—! That's why.....that's why~—!
142. ↩ Camus's speech becomes garbled. Here's the proper English: That's why~~~—! Don't worry~~~~~—!
143. ↩ 'Ohon' – cough to get someone's attention.
144. ↩ Crack
145. ↩ Footsteps
146. ↩ Hiiro's nickname for Mikazuki. Literally means Drool (Yodare) Bird (Tori).
147. ↩ **Leavened flatbread**
148. ↩ Nut/fruit/berry
149. ↩ rough translation: rimo-ne/lemon???
150. ↩ - Fantajia Majikku - Jap || Furigana of Liliyn's Unique Magic
151. ↩ - dame meido - Jap || TL'ed also as NG Maid
152. ↩ - gaki-me- Semi
153. ↩ - iyadaiyada - jap
154. ↩ - Aka-rori- Semi
155. ↩ - Nitouryuu - Jap
156. ↩ - Loli-Baba - Semi
157. ↩ - majime jijii - Semi

# Credits

All rights belong to the author of the Konjiki no Word Master ( ) web novel, Tomoto Sui (

The original source can be found at [ncode.syosetu.com](http://ncode.syosetu.com).

Cover image from the manga by [Sumaki Syungo](#). Edited by [SubaruSumeragi](#).

Huge thanks to [Yoraikun](#), [XCrossJ](#), [NetBlazer](#) and all the translators ([CapsUsingShift](#), [Loliquent](#), [ELYSION](#), [Night Raccoon](#), [Pummels](#) and [insigniapierce](#)) and editors (Dalmenuis and Pork Supreme) on their team for working on this web novel.

Chapter 69 translated by Dalmenuis, XCrossJ.

Chapter 70 translated by [CapsUsingShift](#).

Chapter 71 translated by [Yoraikun](#).

Chapter 72 translated by [XCrossJ](#).

Chapter 73 translated by [NetBlazer](#). Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 74 translated by ELYSION, NetBlazer, Victor Chen and XCrossJ. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 75 translated by [ELYSION](#).

Chapter 76 translated by [Night Raccoon](#), NetBlazer, ELYSION and XCrossJ. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 77 translated by NetBlazer. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 78 translated by ELYSION. Edited by Dalmenuis.

Chapter 79 translated by XCrossJ.

Chapter 80 translated by XCrossJ and CapsUsingShift.

Chapter 81 translated by Netblazer, CapsUsingShift and XCrossJ. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 82 translated by CapsUsingShift. Rough edit by NetBlazer.

Chapter 83 translated by ELYSION. Edited by MrNeutral.

Chapter 84 translated by Yoraikun.

Chapter 85 translated by NetBlazer. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 86 translated by **Loliquent**.

Chapter 87 translated by XCrossJ.

Chapter 88 translated by ELYSION. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 89 translated by XCrossJ.

Chapter 90 translated by ELYSION/Loliquent. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 91 translated by NetBlazer. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 92 translated by **Pummels**. Edited by Dalmenuis and Netblazer. Proofread by XCrossJ.

Chapter 93 translated by Pummels, Loliquent and XCrossJ. Edited by XCrossJ and Dalmenuis.

Chapter 94 translated by Yoraikun. Edited by Dalmenuis.

Chapter 95 translated by Loliquent, Netblazer, Pummels, XCrossJ and Yoraikun. Edited by Dalmenuis, Porky and XCrossJ. Proofread by XCrossJ, Bell and Loliquent.

Chapter 96 translated by XCrossJ, Pummels, Pork Supreme and Netblazer. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 97 translated by Pummels. Edited by Pork and Dal. Proofread by XCrossJ and ELYSION.

Chapter 98 translated by **insigniapierce**. Edited by XCrossJ.

Chapter 99 translated by Loliquent. Edited by Porky and Dal. Proofread by XCrossJ.

Some cleaning/editing and formatting by **DrunkenShield**.